THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

FOUNDED, A.D. 1821

THE GREAT PIONEER FAMILY PAPER OF AMERICA.

Vol. 75. PUBLISHED WEEKLY, AT No. 726 SANSOM ST. Philadelphia, Saturday, February 15, 1896. FIVE CENTS A COPY. $2.00 A YEAR IN ADVANCE. No. 33

A DREAM OF HOME.

BY L. F. D.

Alone one night, I sat and dreamed,
While all around was sleeping,
And through the mist of vanished years
Came troops of memories creeping.

Distinct among the groups, I saw
A farmhouse large and cheery,
Where life sped by in merry rounds,
And days were seldom dreary.
Once more I viewed the long, low rooms,
With windows all unshuttered,
Where, when the nesting-time had come,
Gay song-birds chirped and fluttered.
The breeze played through the open halls,
So cool in summer weather,
And up and down verandas broad
The children romped together.
The lawn sloped downward to the gate,
With clover blooms all dotted,
And shaded by huge trees so old
Their trunks were gnarled and knotted.
Through fields of corn and cotton near,
A path led from the dwelling
To where the shade was deep, and where
A little spring was welling.
Ah! well do I remember how
Within this spot secluded,
Beneath the shade of spreading trees,
With all the world excluded,
The hours flew by on wings of light
To youthful hearts, day dreaming,
Unshadowed by the coming years
For all with sorrows teeming.

Alas! to dream of thee, old home
Fills heart and mind with yearning
But unto thee, as thou wert then
There can be no returning.

SO NEARLY LOST.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A MODEL GIRL," "A LITTLE VIRAGO," "LADYBIRD," "WILFUL BAB," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

DIANA was sitting by the open window. Her hands were clasped round her knees, and she was gazing straight in front of her with a calm abstracted air, as if quite unconscious of the observation that she was at the moment attracting.

The setting sun shone upon her ruffled hair and made it for once golden, instead of nearly red. "A red mop," her sister, Mrs. Primmer, called it; and the sunlight caused her delicate skin to glow really—as a rule it was rather pale—and the brown freckles stood thickly and conspicuously on it, especially just across the bridge of the small nose, which nature had made scornful forever by pointing its tip heavenward after she had fashioned it very carefully and delicately otherwise. That organ was like Diana's features generally, being almost pretty, and yet a failure as far as beauty went.

Diana said it "did to blow" when her brothers bantered her about it; but she could not make as good an apology for the redness of her hair or the brownness of her freckles, though as a child she had once declared that the color of her locks kept her warm. But over the spots on her skin she had mourned the secret ever since she was old enough to care about her appearance at all.

"My skin would have been smooth and clear without those beastly blemishes," she told herself; and then she would make a queer little grimace at her own image in the mirror, for very spite at her own plainness.

The girl loved beauty and all things beautiful. She managed to get extraordinarily good value out of every little loveliness that she came across in her daily life.

It was the love of pure color, and her sense of fitness, that had made her, ever since she attained the dignity of ordering her own frocks, choose such tints, materials, and drapings as made her appear a not unlovely picture, in spite of her "unmistakable plainness," as Mrs. Primmer called it.

All who knew Mrs. Primmer quoted her, whether they liked or disliked her. She had such a precise way of making remarks; and these remarks were as a rule so ladylike and uncharitable, and disagreeable and proper, that they were retailed more than they deserved to be.

Mrs. Primmer was one of those ladies in whom the milk of human kindness turned acid at such an early date that it must have been almost prehistoric. Ever since any one could remember her she had been exactly the same—neatly bound in drab, as far as her outward person went, and flavored almost like a salad with the oil left out. Just now she was talking at Diana and to their aunt, Mrs. Travers.

"As I was saying," she said, raising her voice till it grated on the ear of one of her hearers, "the only right course for Diana to pursue is to come and live with me. It is not every sister who would be ready to allow all her household arrangements to be altered for the sake of a girl who shows so little sense of what is being done for her as Diana; but I hope I know what my duty is, and I shall be ready to do it. Of course I shall expect some small return in the way of deference and consideration of my wishes, neither of which Diana has ever shown in the past, as I feel bound to state. But, if she chooses to make her home with me, and to make herself useful in that home—I could never endure having an idle person about me—she will be welcome. Besides, Mr. Primmer can invest her money for her in some safe manner, so that she may have something for boots and gloves, and to put in the plate at church, and—and so on."

"The interest of $5,000 at five per cent. is $250 a pear," said Diana quietly. "Don't you think it would be a little extravagant to spend all that on boots and gloves and collections?"

Mrs. Primmer drew in her breath with a sharp hissing sound. That was one of her little peculiarities when she was annoyed. But she answered, in much the same tone as before—

"Of course I am concluding that you would like to give a little towards your own keep, Diana. Very few girls would like to be entirely dependent on the charity of their relations."

"Very few indeed," Diana assented gravely; and Mrs. Primmer seemed to find something unpleasant in the girl's tone, for she drew in her breath even more sharply than before.

"Let us understand one another clearly," Diana continued, in the quiet musical voice which was one of her few undeniable attractions. "You offer me a home with you, and in return for that I am to make myself useful and allow you something for my maintenance. How much do you think I ought to pay?"

"I should think that a girl with any nice feeling would not care to offer less than $200 a year."

"Please let us keep 'nice feeling' out of consideration altogether," remarked Diana coldly. "I think $200 a year is more than I can afford, and therefore I must decline your offer."

"But what will you do, my dear?" Mrs. Travers interpolated. "You see, at present there is really no other place open to you. Unfortunately I am obliged to go abroad this winter, as you know, for dear Eliza's health, and I cannot afford to take you with me as well. And neither of your brothers has a home to offer you. It is quite as much as they can do to rub along and pay their fees for examinations, and so on. I am afraid they must find it pretty hard at times as it is. You could not think of going to them?"

"I don't," Diana replied curtly.

"If you will not consider it an impertinence, we should like to be favored with some idea of your plans for the future," Mrs. Primmer said, with great deliberation. "You are the youngest female member of our family, and, if only for the sake of the others, I think you are bound to give us some notion of what you intend to do. We have always been considered respectable, and have been looked up to in the neighborhood."

But Diana ruthlessly cut her observations short.

"And I hope you will always continue to be so." The girl's eyes flashed ominously. "As I shall not remain in the neighborhood, I at least shall not prevent your still being looked up to quite as much in the future."

"Where do you propose going?" Mrs. Travers and Mrs. Primmer cried, almost in one breath.

"To London, I think."

"And what will you do there?"

Diana smiled at them as she answered—

"I think of going into business."

"Into business!" the other ladies echoed. "What do you know about business? What experience have you had? What sort of business are you thinking of taking? Who has been advising you to do so?"

The last question was put by Mrs. Primmer.

"Mr. Irwine and I talked it over when he was down here," Diana replied; "and he was of my opinion that, since we have all been disappointed in our expectations from Uncle Robert, it is necessary for us to make some effort to prevent our being"—she hesitated for a word for a moment, and then went on, with a slight smile playing about her lips—"a burden to our relations."

"And what sort of business does he think you can obtain when you will have nothing but a pittance hardly sufficient to live upon, I should like to know?" demanded Mrs. Primmer.

"I shall invest my $5,000, of course," Diana explained. "Sink it in the business, I mean."

"You may well say 'sink' it!" Mrs. Primmer exclaimed. "You will sink it so deep that you will never be able to raise it again, with all your cleverness. And it will be too late then to turn to those relations whom you slight now."

Mrs. Travers seemed inclined to cry.

"It is so extremely foolish of that old Mr. Irwine to have advised you to such a course, Diana," she whispered. "You know he is the most eccentric, unworldly old man possible. He knows absolutely nothing beyond his hobby, collecting, or whatever it is. I am sure for my part I could never make out what he did collect, except that it was nothing half so sensible as tax gathering. What can he possibly know about business?"

"More than you think," Diana answered a little triumphantly. "He has been a collector for years of all sorts of beautiful things, principally rare stuffs and silks. He has brocades in his rooms that will really stand alone, and silks so fine and soft that you may draw a whole piece through a wedding ring. And the colors of them!" She threw her head back, and gave a little laugh of delight. "They are like nothing you ever saw."

"I dare say that is true," Mrs. Primmer retorted, with a vinegar smile.

"But what is all this to do with you?" Mrs. Travers demanded.

"Everything," Diana answered promptly. "I propose becoming an art decorator. That means," she explained, "I shall show the people who have the money, and not the taste, how to make their rooms and homes really beautiful. I shall invest my $5,000 in setting up properly. Mr. Irwine has placed his collection at my service, so that I shall have the most beautiful designs and colorings to look at to guide me at first, and after I have once started I think I shall do very well. I am sure I shall. I know that I have artistic perception. I am not afraid of making mistakes. Besides, experience will come. It will be a perfectly delightful existence." She threw up her hands with a little extravagant gesture. "You can't think how glad I am that Uncle Robert left all his money to the Home for Sickly Cats, or whatever it was, and disinherited us all. If he had not, I might have had to live on in this humdrum little place all my life."

Mrs. Primmer rose and began to draw on her gloves.

"I have nothing to say," she began. "After that last speech of Diana's there is no further remark to be made. When a girl says she is glad—glad that her own flesh and blood have lost the money that they had every right to expect, and that they have been looking forward to all their lives—she—she deserves to be whipped!" And without any further leave-taking Mrs. Primmer walked out of the house.

Mrs. Travers wiped her eyes a little suspiciously as she asked—

"My dear Diana, what will become of you if you alienate all your friends like this?"

But Diana only laughed as she laid her round arms about the old lady's neck.

"I can find plenty of people who are not relations who will take me in and give me a home in return for my making myself useful, and not ask me to pay them $200 a year besides. Don't trouble about me, auntie. Let us have tea together comfortably for the last time—the last time in Willowmere, I mean—and think and talk only of pleasant things. Tell me all you mean to do abroad as soon as Aunt Eliza is well enough to let you enjoy yourselves, and when you are tired I will talk to you about the fine plans I have in my head. I mean to make an independence certainly, possibly a fortune. Don't you think I am very daring to announce that beforehand, Aunt Marjorie?"

"I have always heard that it is not lucky to boast beforehand of the things one intends to do," Aunt Marjorie answered, with a slightly superstitious lowering of her voice. "Indeed, I myself knew a lady who always boasted that she would never marry a plain man. And, as it turned out, the man whom she accepted in the end was not only plain, but he had a spinal malformation besides. But what are you doing, my dear? You never mean to let Annie bring in so many things just for tea—why, it looks quite old-fashioned and——"

"Pleasant, eh?" Diana queried, as she set the tall silver candlesticks on the table. "Now, own you think so. Besides, it is very late, long past seven, and this will be tea and supper combined for both of us. We forgot our afternoon tea, discussing all the things that I ought and ought not to do. Now come and sit down, and you shall pour out while I cut the ham. Do you see old Anne's hot cakes? Don't they look and smell nice? What an appetite arguing gives one, to be sure!"

All the time she talked Diana was busy filling the old lady's plate with good things, and over the cosy sociable meal

Mrs. Travers forgot her anxiety respecting the girl's future.

Diana's going was not even spoken of again till just as Mrs. Travers was leaving. Then, as she kissed the girl's red lips —Diana was tall and slim, and Aunt Marjorie was short and stout—she asked anxiously—

"And when do you really go, dear?"

"To-morrow," Diana replied, flushing a little. "I know it must seem sudden to you, but I—I could not remain during the sale. I have grown to love even the chairs and tables in this house as I dare say I shall never love such things again. Every one of them has a story or a connection with something. This old easy-chair was always Bert's especial property—don't you remember? If either Fred or I dared to sit in it, he would tip us out very promptly. We used to risk that sometimes, just for the fun of it. Then that high-backed stiff one over there was Charlotte's when she used to come and lecture us. She always sat in it on those occasions. I used to wonder when I was very little whether it was sitting in the chair that had made her so stiff, or whether it was she that had made the chair so dismally uncomfortable and upright—taken all the curves out of it, you know, in the way that she would take them out of anything, even a kitten or a baby, I believe, if either would ever go to her."

"Hush, hush, my dear! You must not talk like that," said Mrs. Travers, smiling, yet half shocked. "It is really very wrong of you, for Charlotte is a most exemplary woman—most exemplary."

Her niece nodded, and for an instant her face was at rest; but the next moment a broad smile broke across it.

"You should see pussy run when she comes!" she exclaimed; and then she gave that naughty little laugh of hers. "Now come and bid 'Good-bye' to Anne. She is going with me, of course. Isn't it good of her? She has never been more than ten miles away from Willowmere in her life; and I do hope she will not fall ill in London. It is very kind of her to offer to accompany me!"

"You have always been used to a country life, too," Aunt Marjorie said musingly: "and I shouldn't wonder if you were both taken ill."

But Diana was holding the kitchen door open, so the old lady had to pass in without saying anything more just then.

It was a bright old-fashioned kitchen, with its white-washed walls and its red-brick floor, the eight-day clock ticking in one corner, and the large brass warming-pan gleaming in another. The only light was that from the fire, and its genial glow fell upon everything, but most strongly upon the figure of the old countrywoman sitting with her apron over her head, swaying slowly to and fro in an old oak rocking-chair.

"Why, Nannie, what is the matter?" Diana cried, advancing quickly. "Are you ill? What is wrong?"

"Nothing, my dear, only——" The old woman paused and sobbed. How shall I ever tell time in London by any clock but the one I've been used to these thirty years an' more? Oh, what an old fool I be! Don't you take any notice of me, my dear. It's nothing but my foolish old head that gets 'mazed like, sometimes, with the thought of going to London."

"You shall have your clock," Diana said softly, "and—and your warming-pan too, if you like"—glancing round to see if there were any other object on which old Anne might by chance have set her affections. "You know each of us was to take a couple of articles out of the old home for remembrance, and you and I will have the clock and the warming-pan—shall we?"

"'Twould be a comfort," Anne admitted, wiping her eyes. "I don't think as how I could ever bring myself to cook a dinner by one of them new-fangled clocks with a little boy and sitting on the top a-riding horseback, or swinging, or such, though no doubt they be nice for a parlor."

Diana did not trouble to explain that even in London it is not usual to have drawing room clocks in a kitchen.

"That will be all right," she said, smiling. "Now, here is aunt Travers waiting to say good-bye to you, and you won't even look at her."

After that the little ceremony of leave-taking was gone through, and then Mrs. Travers kissed her wilful niece.

"I can't bear to think of you being in London, with no one near you but poor old Anne," she sighed.

"And also Mr. Irwine," supplemented Diana.

"I thought you had chosen to take the old dessert service as your memento of this old house?" observed her aunt.

"So I had, but it's easily unpacked, and I shall do better without it than Anne will without her clock," Diana answered; aunt Marjorie went away at last, tearful and full of forebodings.

The next evening a girl, leaning far out of a railway car window, cried:—

"Here is London at last, Anne!"

And the old woman with the warming pan clasped tightly in her arms, answered ruefully:—

"So it seems, miss."

CHAPTER II.

"SO you are really here!" Mr. Irwine cried, looking down at Diana as she sat in a delightfully cosy chair by his fireside and stretched out her hands to the blaze, which was pleasant even in September in the evenings. "And you are not at all afaid of the great city, and earning your own living, and all the rest of it, I can see by your face. You are simply dying to begin at once?"

"No, I can wait till to-morrow very well," the girl replied demurely. She glanced up at the clock as she spoke, and its hands marked a quarter past nine.

Mr. Irwine laughed, as if she had said something very witty.

"She is not in any hurry—she can wait till to-morrow!" he chuckled to himself. "Quite a reasonable, patient sort of young woman. And to-morrow, I suppose, I shall have to take you to look for suitable accommodations for two women and a warming pan, eh?"

"And an eight day clock," Diana added.

"Ah, yes; I mustn't forget the clock!" he said jocularly.

Mr. Irwine was an old bachelor of some seventy years of age. His hobby was to form a sufficiently good collection of odds-and-ends of various sorts to leave to the nation when he died. He had lived alone in "the great village" with an old housekeeper to take care of him for longer than anyone could remember.

It seemed to Diana that he looked, if anything, younger than he used when she first remembered him; for in her childish days his bent shoulders and white hair had seemed to her to indicate an age not far short of Methuselah's. But now she felt that he was almost the younger of the two as she caught his keen, kindly glance and noticed his evident delight over her spirit of adventure.

They had dined together, and now she and Anne were spending the evening in his rooms before they went back to the quiet little hotel close at hand, where he had engaged apartments for them.

Anne and Mr. Irwine's old housekeeper, as he invariably styled her, though she was some twenty years younger than himself, were talking together comfortably in the next room, though the former persisted in declaring herself deafened by the roar outside, "for all the world like a storm o' wind in the pines," as she said.

"You mean to spend eight hundred pounds on setting up, you say," the old man inquired, and to keep two to live on till the fishes begin to come into your net? It seems a little risky, perhaps, but still I should do it if I were you. I can help you to find the sort of place you want for yourself and old Anne, and I dare say I can lend you two or three things to put about your rooms to make them look artistic. That is the proper word, I believe, though it has been sadly debased since we took it into every day use. Every threepenny'sha'penny cretonne, whose colors set your teeth on edge merely to look at, is artistic nowadays, if you believe the shopmen."

"If you will only help me," Diana answered, altogether ignoring the cretonne question, "I am sure everything will be all right. I am not afraid of myself. I believe that I shall not make many mistakes even at first, for I think I love the really beautiful too well for that."

"I believe you do," Mr. Irwine agreed. "Now let me show you a bit of tapestry I picked up the other day, and tell me what you think of it," he continued, evidently believing that Diana's affairs needed no further discussion just then. "There—what do you think of that?"

What Diana thought took so long to tell that old Anne came rapping at the door to say that it was after ten o'clock, and hadn't they better be getting home?

"Of course!" cried the old gentleman. "You must both be very sleepy, no doubt. How inconsiderate of me to rattle on and forget that! I will take you both back to your hotel. I hope they have warmed your bed with your warming-pan, Anne."

"I should like to see them dare to lay so much as a finger on it!" the old woman returned wrathfully. "A pack of giggling minxes! They was a-laughing at it in their sleeves, I know, when I carried it up-stairs. I saw them, though they did not think I did. Thank you, sir; I can see my way down the stairs very well—you needn't trouble;" for Mr. Irwine was offering to steady her steps, and showing that kindly consideration for her infirmities which he invariably did to people younger and more active than himself. It had the effect of irritating them a little sometimes, but that was not his fault.

Diana was rather silent as they walked towards where they were stopping. Determined as she was to make her future life a success, a sense of loneliness had fallen upon her.

She bade Mr. Irwine "good-bye till to-morrow" in apparently as cheerful a tone as usual. But, long after she had soothed old Anne's nervousness and trepidation sufficiently to allow her to fall into a sound sleep, the girl herself lay awake staring at the September moon peeping down upon her round the corner of a chimney-pot, and looking so familiar, and yet unfamiliar, in its new surroundings that it made her feel more lonesome than ever.

* * * * * *

Three busy weeks flew by, and Diana was installed in her new home, a flat on the ground floor, in a fashionable western district.

She had curtains, fancy vases, and all the paraphernalia of her new occupation about her. Mr. Irwine and she had arranged her rooms, and the effect seemed as near perfection as possible.

"Now, all we want is the clients," the old man remarked, when at last he and Diana sat down weary, but triumphant, and surveyed the scene of their labors. "It's wonderful how soon one can get things done if one only works oneself! Here comes Anne with some tea for us! I shall drink to your prosperity in a bumper."

"You must eat as well as drink," the girl told him. "See, here are some of Anne's little cakes, just like those you used to enjoy when you came to Willowmere. If we shut our eyes, we can almost fancy ourselves there."

"Especially if I leave my kitchen door open and you listen to my old clock a-ticking," Anne observed, with the freedom of an old servant who know no reason why she should not be allowed to put a word or two into the conversation. "It makes me feel quite home-like. And, since Miss Diana bought me another rocking-chair—though I will say it was a pity she should spend so much money to get an old thing when she could get a smart new one for half the price—I am that comfortable that I could almost forget we was in London if it wasn't for the noise."

"Oh, you'll get used to that in time!" Mr. Irwine told her cheerily, as he stirred and sipped. "You'll get so used to it that you'll miss it if you should go away, and lie awake because of the silence—you see if you don't."

But the old woman could not be induced to believe that. She went away, shaking her head, and laughing at the idea of being kept awake by the country quiet to which she had been used all her life.

"It's true, though!" Mr. Irwine persisted. "Hey! What's that?"

For Diana had risen, and, putting down her cup, proceeded to draw something that looked not unlike a monumental tablet from a corner where it had hitherto rested unseen.

"I kept this till the last to surprise you," the girl explained, laughing. "The man will be here in a few minutes to fix it in its place. What do you think of it?" She held it up for Mr. Irwine's inspection; but it turned out to be a simple door-plate, on which was engraved, "Diana Terry, Designer and Art Decorator."

They were both as pleased as possible with the simple inscription. After having read it aloud, they proceeded to remark upon the clearness of the letters, the brightness of the brass, and so forth.

"Anne will get as fond of that as she is of the warming-pan if she is to polish it every day," Mr. Irwine said, with a chuckle. "Ah, here she is to tell you that the man has come!"

Anne bore off the door-plate, and Miss Terry and her visitor were soon after listening to the sounds of clinking and hammering.

Mr. Irwine looked at his watch. They had had tea early, as it was not yet five o'clock, and the evening was nice and bright.

"Suppose you put on your hat, Mrs. Art Decorator," he suggested, "and you and I go for a little turn just up and down the street. Then we can have a look at the new door-plate."

"You are a wizard!" Diana exclaimed, clapping her hands and laughing. "How did you guess? That was exactly what I was longing to do!"

So the old gentleman and the girl went out together and amused themselves by walking past the house, first on this side of the street and then on that, for the purpose of seeing how the plate looked from every point of view.

Once they actually saw a well-dressed man stop to read it, and then their glee knew no bounds.

The three following days Diana spent at home waiting for clients. She did not find the time hang heavily on her hands, for she was busy designing a hall lamp for one thing, besides which she had various schemes of color in her head, the effect of which she was anxious to see on paper before trying them practically.

Still, when the fourth day came, and the morning passed as other days had done, without a single ring at the bell, she began to feel a good deal disappointed. But in the afternoon she was rewarded for her patience.

Just as the light was beginning to wane, she heard a man's voice asking for Miss Terry, and Anne ushered in a strange gentleman, and in her perturbation forgot to announce his name.

Diana rose and saw a tall, well-built man with a bronzed face, out of which his gray eyes shone clearly. He had a fair mustache, which he was biting a little nervously, and his fair hair was brushed back from his forehead so as to show the clear rim of white where his hat-brim had shaded it.

He was attired in the ordinary morning-dress, and bore the appearance of one in a superior position. He was a gentleman, Diana decided at the first glance, in spite of his trepidation.

He stood there in front of her looking like an awkward schoolboy, notwithstanding his hirsute appendage and length of limb.

"You wanted to see me?" Miss Terry asked, breaking the awkward silence.

"I think so," he answered, in a pleasant voice, in which quick-witted Diana instantly detected a slight American accent. "That is—I want to see Miss Terry, the lady art-decorator."

"Quite so," returned Diana, becoming self-possessed all at once. This was really a client, then. "I am Miss Terry. Won't you sit down?"

The broad-shouldered stranger glanced rather helplessly round.

"Where?" he asked, after a moment; and then it was Diana's turn to grow confused, for there was not a single seat available. She had covered them all with sketches or bits of drapery with which she had been trying effects.

To cover her confusion, she said in her most business-like manner, as she swept two or three drawings off a lounging-chair:—

"What can I do for you?"

"I want you to furnish and decorate a house for me throughout," he answered, recovering his coolness as soon as they got to business. "It's at Queen's Gate; I wish you to do exactly what you think best with it, and do not want to be bothered about anything. I don't care whether it is Japanese or Early English, or Queen Anne, or all of them, so long as——"

He broke off abruptly, and colored deeply.

"So long as what?" Diana asked, a little severely.

"I want it to be very nice," he answered, in rather an indistinct tone, twirling his hat in his hands, as if he had no other object in existence that to convert it into a Catherine wheel. "I want it to be the kind of house that"—here he made a desperate effort—"that a girl would like—a young lady who has always been used to having everything nice and pretty about her. That was the reason I came to you. I saw your advertisement, you see, and so I asked about you; but all the information I could obtain was that you were most likely a girl just making a beginning. So I thought to myself, 'Well, a girl will be the best person to choose the sort of things girls like.' So I came."

Miss Terry began to grow interested. It was great fun to have this big blushing fellow sitting there opposite to her, looking so delightfully sheepish, and yet so much in earnest about his house. She experienced a little thrill of pleasure at having got away from Willowmere for ever, and into a more congenial sphere of action.

"Tell me as much about the young lady as you can," she said, in her sympathetic voice. "Is she very young? Has she lived in the country or in London?"

Perhaps her questions were a little odd; but then what was she to do? How was she to please the taste of an utterly unknown person? But the stranger was quite ready to talk on this interesting subject.

"She is about five-and-twenty," he answered eagerly, "and she has been everywhere, I think, and seen everything—at least, so it seems to me. Till the last few months I have been in America, you see," he added, with the air of a person who communicates an unexpected piece of intelligence.

Diana raised her eyebrows a little as she bowed.

"I could almost have told you that myself," she was thinking.

"And she is very well off, or rather her people are," the young man went on. "The young lady is of an old English family, and very beautiful." He colored a little again as he spoke of her beauty. "I think that's all," he concluded abruptly.

"But why," Diana began, then hesitated, and recommenced in another way. "It would be very much more simple if she were to come round herself and talk over the matter with me. Couldn't you ask her to call?" Then, as she saw by his countenance that he thought that course quite impossible, she added, "Is it to be a surprise?"

"Yes—that's it," he replied hurriedly.

"But will the lady like that?" Diana inquired; her interest in the unknown girl was deepening. "I think I would rather be consulted if—if it were to be my house."

The young man grew suddenly uncomfortable again, and his hat began to rotate once more.

"You don't understand," he replied desperately. "I—I am not engaged to her, and I dare say she will never think of me twice. But I shall try to make her," he added, with an energetic movement of his right hand, as if he were a man accustomed to face and overcome difficulties.

"It's like this, you see," he recommenced, after a pause.

"Perhaps you would rather not tell me," said Diana, with a feeling of compassion for his evident shyness, though she was, woman-like, longing to hear all about the young lady.

"Oh, I dare say that it will be more satisfactory if you understand it all!" he answered, with his face aflame; then he got up and began to walk up and down the room as he confided his story to Miss Terry.

"I've been out in the wilds of California all my life—that is, you would think them wilds, I expect; but I got so used to them that they were as home-like to me as any place in the world could be. My father was an Englishman—I am a naturalised American"—he said this rather proudly, as if he felt it to be an honor he was claiming. "I came into my father's money when he died. It was a good deal, and I thought I should like to see Europe and his old home. So six months ago I came over here. People was very kind and nice to me. I had heard it was difficult to get into English society, but I did not find it so." Looking at him as he stood by the window, and thinking of the fortune he had to back him up, Diana did not wonder.

"One day I met—met a girl whom I thought, and still think—well, you can understand what I mean," he continued. 'There's no need for me to go into all that. But I'd just lie down and let her wipe her dainty little shoes on me, if it would give her the least satisfaction, which, as she is a nice girl, it wouldn't, you bet. However, now you understand where I am. And of course I feel that she must think me what you call over here an awful duffer. My father taught me Greek and Latin and some mathematics, and I have read again and again every book I came across. But nobody speaks about Dickens and Thackeray over here—or about Shakspere or Milton for that matter. You have a lot of new things to talk of instead. Fellows write vers de societe, and girls write books or novels of one sort or another; and everybody says, 'Have you read this?' or 'seen that?' or 'heard the other?' till I am just bewildered. I can't keep pace with them, and I wouldn't if I could. I'd as soon be fed forever on one of those sweet things that they give you at parties which are all froth on the top and sickening underneath, with a dash of wine in them somewhere. And so I look like a fool!

"Well, a man naturally doesn't like that. So I thought that if I were to have a house done up properly—mind, it will have to be as good as they make them, Miss Terry—and then, when it was all done, if I were to take her all over it, and show her that I am not such a stupid as not to know the proper kind of case in which a man should keep his jewels, she might, perhaps think a little better of me. You see"—turning to her almost fiercely—"a man can't go to a girl and say: 'Look here: I know all about horses and cattle, and I have read your own classics till I could pass an examination in most of them, and I'm not such an ass as you think.' But if she were to see the house and like it——"

Here he paused.

"She shall like it if I can make her!" Diana cried. She had risen and stood facing him with a flush on her cheeks. His excitement had infected her for a moment.

The young fellow came forward and caught her hand in his.

"You are a daisy!" he exclaimed enthusiastically.

Diana drew her hand away demurely, but she liked him none the less for his outburst.

"When can I see the house?" she asked.

"To-morrow, if you will. I dare say you will find it wants a lot done to it in every way; but I expect we can manage to make the British workman hurry up a little if we show him the almighty dollar!"

"I don't know," Diana said, a little dubiously. "The British workman is uncommonly hard to hurry. Still, we will try."

"By-the-bye," remarked the young fellow, looking a little foolish, "I don't think you know my name yet. The—the old lady who was kind enough to show me in forgot to give it to you, I think. It's Carr, Edgar Y. Carr."

"What does the 'Y' stand for?" Diana inquired, and then was ready to pinch herself for her ill manners and curiosity.

"Yates—my grandmother was a Yates," the young man replied. He was well-bred so far that he did not seem to find anything unusual in whatever Diana chose to say.

"I believe if I were to ask him how many of his teeth were stopped—though I don't believe any of them are for that matter—he would take the question as the most natural one in the world. I wonder how far he thinks the curiosity of an art decorator may naturally go?" Diana thought, blushing a little as he stood in front of her, evidently waiting for any more questions that it might occur to her to put.

Just at that moment old Anne came to the door with the tea.

"Come in!" Diana answered absently to her knock; but the next instant she was ready to be vexed or to laugh—she was not quite sure which—as Mr. Carr moved quickly from her side and absolutely insisted on taking the tea-tray from the old woman's hands.

"Deary me, sir," old Anne remonstrated—"it isn't heavy, bless your heart! I'm ashamed to trouble you."

"You needn't be," said Mr. Carr coolly. "I guess I can hold it very comfortably till you have cleared a place to set it down."

Anne looked at her mistress for orders; but that lady was engaged in clearing a small table for the reception of the tray, and Anne herself did not feel equal to further argument at that moment. When everything was arranged, and Anne had gone, Miss Terry looked at her visitor rather severely. He was evidently unconscious of having done anything wrong, and was apparently waiting to be ordered some tea.

"Don't you ever let servants do their own work when you are out anywhere?" she asked gravely, though there was a trace of laughter in her voice. "At dinner, for instance, do you insist on getting up and handing the footman the plates?"

"I should think not!" Mr. Carr replied indignantly. "Great hulking fellows! I always feel that I should like to give them something little stiffer to do. And I don't help the girls either. They are young and brisk, and it does them good to work. But you wouldn't have a man stand still and let an old lady like yours wait on him, would you?"

"I shall feel ashamed of myself," Diana answered, as she handed him a cup of tea. "I let her wait on me, and I am young and strong."

"Oh, that's different!" Mr. Carr said, as he helped himself to cake. "She likes it, I dare say. Is she a relation, or is she just one of the attached faithful old servants one meets with in England? They have not got them over in America yet."

"She is my old nurse," Diana explained, "and a dear old soul too. Isn't she pretty? I love old women's beauty, don't you? The softness of her white hair and the ruddiness of her cheeks are such a pretty contrast. She has always led a healthy country life, you see. It was very good of her to come to London to look after me, wasn't it?"

"Haven't you any one else to take care of you?" Mr. Carr asked.

Diana felt almost pleased to find that he could ask direct questions. Besides that, there was an honesty in his glance that prevented her from feeling that it was anything but quite natural.

"No—no one else," she answered, looking up at him with a frank glance. "My mother and father died when I was quite young. I have a married sister, who was supposed to take charge of us when we were little, and I have two brothers, one just older and one a year younger than myself. They are neither of them in London. They are both trying to work their way into professions, and, as we have very little money now, they have to toil hard to manage it. One of them is in a lawyer's office down in Yorkshire, while the other is in Edinburgh studying for the medical profession. There was not much need for either of them to seek an occupation till lately, because we expected to inherit a good deal of money. But when my uncle died we found ourselves left with only a thousand pounds each. So the old home was sold to pay the many debts that were to have been settled when we got Uncle Robert's money. But now we have all to turn out, except my married sister of course!" Diana smiled at her visitor as frankly as if she thought their having all to work was the pleasantest arrangement, as she did just then.

"It's very good of you to tell me all about it," Mr. Carr said, rising. "It is so much easier for us to understand one another now. I think, by-the-bye, that perhaps it might help you in your work for you to see a portrait of—of the lady I was talking about. I will bring one to show you to-morrow, if you like."

"I should like to see it, if you please!" Miss Terry cried, eagerly. "It would be the next best thing to seeing the young lady herself. Why did you not bring it with you?"

"How could I tell what you were like?" Mr. Carr returned quickly. "There are some people in the world to whom one can't talk—I dare say you know that. I hoped, of course, that I should find you nice, and I am very glad that I have not been disappointed."

He held out his hand, saying:—

"Then I will meet you to-morrow—shall we say at ten? I have written down the address for you, so that you can begin."

"Don't forget the photograph," Diana exhorted him, as she shook hands. "That is the most important thing, remember."

Miss Terry herself went to the door with him, because she was afraid that if she asked old Anne to do so he would insist that she was too old to perform such an arduous service, or something equally ridiculous.

"But I like him all the better for it," she said to herself, as she stood behind one of her art curtains and watched him going down the street.

"There is something so ingenious and pleasant about him. I really think I am very fortunate in my first client. I wonder what Mr. Irwine will say to it all? I think Anne may as well put on her bonnet and come round to his house with me. I must talk to somebody about it. Fancy my having a big house to do absolutely as I like with—the only thing that is asked of me being that I shall make it as pretty as I can! The idea is quite refreshing!"

"Has he gone, Miss Diana?" Anne asked, peeping in cautiously. "He was a queer gentleman, wasn't he? I should have taken him for some country chap sooner than a Londoner, though he looked very nice, I am sure, and behaved uncommon civil."

"The boys would like him," Diana answered, irrelevantly. "But how Charlotte would hate him!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE YOUNG WIFE.—"It takes a heroine to be economical," says Miss Mulock, "for will not many a woman rather run in debt for a bonnet than wear her old one a year behind the mode?—give a ball and stint the family dinner for a month after?—take a large house and furnish handsome reception rooms, while her household huddle together anyhow?

"She prefers this a hundred times to stating plainly by work or manner: 'My income is so much a year—I don't care who knows it—it will not allow me to live beyond a certain rate; it will not keep comfortably both my family and acquaintance; therefore excuse my preferring the comfort of my family to the entertainment of my acquaintance. And, society, if you choose to look in upon us, you must just take us as we are, without any pretence of any kind, or you may shut the door, and say good-bye."

Bric-a-Brac.

POISON RINGS.—Poison rings, during the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, were very common in Italy. The bezel of the ring was a hollow cup, opened by a spring, and designed to contain a quantity of poison to be used either for suicide or murder.

THE HALCYON.—The halcyon alluded to by the poets of old days is the bird called the kingfisher. It is believed by the ancients that, while the female brooded over the many eggs, the sea and weather remained calm and unruffled; hence arose the expression of halcyon days.

THE LARGEST BOTTLE.—The largest bottle in the world is one hundred and fifteen feet high. Two enormous doors give access to the ground floor which is a refreshment room, staircases in the inside lead to the bottle's neck, where there is a terrace which holds nearly forty people. The cork is a kiosque.

BULL FIGHTS.—Bull fights in Spain are equivalent to the fights of gladiators among the Romans, which at once disgraced and brutalized that people. The amphitheatre for the amusement, as it is called, of bull fighting is 330 feet in diameter, with sitting and standing room for 15,000 spectators.

THE BLADDER-WORT.—One of the most curious enemies of British fresh water fishes is a small floating water reed—the bladder-wort. Along its branches are a number of small green vesicles or bladders, which, being furnished with tiny jaws, seize upon the little fish, which are assimilated into its substance. This is a subtle poacher, the true character of which has only lately been detected.

THE NOSE.—In Japan the nose is considered to be the most important feature of the face. According to its size it determines the beauty of its owner, the lady who possesses a large one always being a reigning belle. This is probably due to the fact that difference in noses constitutes almost the only difference in one Japanese face from another, as the eyes are invariably black, the chin receding, and the cheek-bones high.

UNDER GROUND.—Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, at a family meeting, drank the health of all the company, adding, "What a glorious sight it is to see such a number of branches flourishing from one root!" But observing Jack Spencer laugh, she insisted on knowing what occasioned his mirth, and promised to forgive him, be it what it would. "Why, then, madam," said he, "I was thinking how much more the branches would flourish if the root were under ground."

ATMOSPHERE.—Atmosphere is a very important agent in the disintegration of the earth's surface, because it touches every part of the surface that is exposed. The impurities in the atmosphere are the cause of its being heated by the sun, and the difference in temperature between day and night causes, in many parts of the world, a rapid expansion of the earth's surface during the day and a sudden contraction at night. Dr. Livingstone, who found a difference of 157 degrees between that of day and night in Africa, said the contraction at night was so rapid that he could "hear the rocks crack." This means that they are gradually pulverised into a dust so fine that the winds carry it away.

THE DELUGE.—In the British Museum there is a Chaldean tablet of stone on which is inscribed the story of the Deluge. According to the Chaldean scribe the Flood, as described by the Bible, was a punishment for sin against God. Only the Chaldeans were heathens, and Noah is made to say that he is the only righteous man, and the only one who paid homage to the gods. This account is not upon a separate tablet but is incorporated with a series of other legends known as the "Legends of Isdhubar," which formed an epic in twelve books or tablets, each of which was dedicated to a sign of the Zodiac. The story of the Deluge is written in cuneiform characters on the twelfth stone, and is dedicated to "The Month of the Course of Rain," corresponding to the Zodiac sign, Aquarius. It tells of great rain-storms which swept down the Tigro-Euphrates valley, at the order of the god Bel, who decided to drown all mankind. But the god Anu looked with favorable eyes upon Noah, and secretly advised him to build a ship. There are of course great variations between the Chaldean and the Hebrew accounts, but their general similarity is most interesting.

WHAT is the worst kind of education?—To be brought up by a policeman.

A VALENTINE.

BY STANSBY.

Lo! the distant dawning
In the Eastern skies,
Brings the wished-for morning
Lovers ever prize.
Cupid's self rejoices,
Hymen smiles benign,
As a thousand voices
Greet St. Valentine.

Love! I love thee only—
I have loved thee long,
Through a lifetime lonely
With affection strong.
One bright hope shone clearest
Ever through the past—
'Twas to win thee, dearest,
For my own at last.

Leave me not unheeded,
Grant my suit success,
But one word is needed,—
Let that word be "Yes."
Then, come joy or sorrow,
Link thy fate with mine,
And we'll wed to-morrow,
Sweetest valentine!

A WAR WITH FATE

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A FATAL MOMENT," "A RIGHTEOUS RETRIBUTION," "WRECKED," "THE FRUITS OF A CRIME," ETC.

CHAPTER XV.

IT seemed to Thir Bright that she was hours in getting to the end of the silent stretch of road which lay between the quarry path and the Rectory; and yet she knew afterwards that she must have traveled quickly, for Sheelah had not been able to keep up with her, but came panting along the garden path when Thir had nearly recovered her breath.

When she reached the gate, she saw Dora, through the as-yet-uncurtained window of the dining room, putting the globe on the lamp she had just lighted. Thir ran straight across the lawn and flower-beds, and beat upon the window pane with her hands.

"Make haste, make haste!" she gasped, while Dora was still only half way across the room. "Oh, make haste, pray! There is a man in a fit on the common! He may die before we get to him! Oh, pray, pray make haste!"

"In a fit?" echoed Dora. "What sort of a man? What part of the common? How came you to see him?"

"He looked like a sailor; he was coming down the quarry path; I watched him coming; he dropped at my feet! Oh, pray be quick!"

"A sailor? The quarry path?" cried Dora, repeating the words as if they possessed some strange meaning for her. "A sailor at the quarry path?" she reiterated, as if the phrase held a hidden horror. "Wait a moment; I will come at once!"

Thir, trying to check the heaving of her bosom, watched Dora hurry from the dining room, and then moved towards the door and waited, guessing that Miss Valland was getting her hat.

But, when the Rector's daughter came out, she had a lighted lantern in her hand and a little spirit flask; and Thir noticed with surprise that she was in a state of most unusual agitation.

"You must not come with me!" she said harshly, as Thir turned to lead the way. "The man may be starving! Go to Ursula and get some food and a blanket. Bring her with you, and come after me as fast as you can!"

"You will go alone?" cried Thir, following her to the gate, incredulous and admiring. "Isn't Mr. Valland at home? You will dare to go alone?"

"What is there to be afraid of in a fainting man?" asked Dora contemptuously. "No—my father's out. But I'm more used to this sort of thing than you are. Go to Ursula and hurry her."

Thir stood outside the gate for a moment, looking after the lonely hurrying figure as it sped away into the darkness, with a gleam of yellow light flitting along the road at its side. She would rather have accompanied Dora, and for a moment she was almost inclined to start after her; but she turned back to the house instead, shrugging her shoulders at her own folly. Miss Valland was quite able to take care of herself!

She found Ursula in the kitchen, with her spectacles on, her nose within two inches of the lamp, darning stockings; and in Thir's present state of mind Ursula was a very great trial. First of all, she wanted to hear all the details of the event before seeing after the food, and, when Thir flatly refused to tell her a word until they were on their way, the old woman took a quarter of an hour to do what Thir would have done in five minutes. Just as they were about to start, Ursula insisted upon turning back to look up the house. But they moved on at last, walking as fast as they could along the road, in the shadow of the pines.

As they drew near the fateful spot, Thir ran on ahead, expecting to find Dora and her charge behind the the gorge-bush which grew at the side of the path. But, when she got round to the other side, when the man had fallen, she found nobody there. She could not believe the evidence of her own senses at first, and went groping round the nearest bushes, expecting to find the pair every moment.

"Miss Valland, where are you?" she asked softly—and her voice sounded weird and terrifying in the uncanny silence. Was she the victim of a ghastly nightmare, she wondered, and had that horrible vision of the falling man never existed but in her own imagination? "Where are you, Dora?" she cried again, trying to reassure herself and Ursula by assuming a courage she was far from feeling. "Dora! Miss Valland! Where are you?"

But the raising of her voice has no effect beyond that of rousing the echo from the distant quarry, which sent her own question back as if in mockery. "Where are you?"

"It is very strange, Ursula," she said, trying to keep her voice steady, because she did not wish to frighten the old woman. "Miss Valland cannot have come back, or we should have met her. What do you think we had better do?"

"Best goon a bit farther down the road," advised Ursula. "Maybe she's got the poor creature as far as the lodge yonder. Martin Fox will be home to his tea by this time, and, if there's no news of her there, he will get Costigan or one of the stable-lads from the house to help him to look about a bit."

"Yes—that will be best," agreed Thir.

"Don't you go frightening yourself, Miss Bright," continued Ursula; "I know my young lady better than you do. She won't come to no harm over this sort of thing; she's too use to holding her own among rough people of all sorts; she's got a way with her that would tame a tiger—it's that commanding! No half-starved man would try any nonsense with her!"

"Thank goodness for that!" returned Thir fervently. "But I shall be glad, all the same, Ursula, to see her safe and sound. It is a terrifying sort of idea to think of her out here alone with that wild raffish-looking creature."

"There is Mrs Fox standing in the doorway!" cried Ursula, as they came within sight of the lodge door. "I suppose Martin isn't home yet—likely she's watching for him."

But it seemed as if Mrs. Fox was rather watching for them, for she came at once to the small entrance next to the carriage gates and opened it.

"Miss Valland is all right ma'am!" she called out, addressing Ursula in the respectful fashion common among the younger generation of village folk at Quilter's Common. "She came here for the key of the plantation door a good ten minutes ago. She told me, if you came to ask, to say it was all right. Won't you come in and rest a bit?"

"All right!" echoed Thir, following the woman into her neat little parlor kitchen.

She felt half stupefied with surprise, and scarcely saw Sheelah's wild signs of delight at this meeting with an old acquaintance. "How can it be all right? And, Mrs. Fox, what did she want with the key of the plantation door?"

"She wanted to go the near out to the railway-station, miss."

"The railway station?"

"Yes, miss. She was going to see the man off herself."

"See him off?" gasped Thir. "Was he—did you see him?—was he able to walk?"

"Oh, yes, miss! He wasn't as bad as all that," replied Mrs. Fox, as if she were anxious to make all the allowance she could for the person alluded to. "To be sure, I didn't see him very plainly, but he seemed to stand steady enough while he waited for Miss Valland. She hadn't got her purse in her pocket, miss, and I had to go upstairs for the money."

"The money? What money?"

"The money for his ticket, miss. And I couldn't help seeing him as I got the money out of the table drawer in front of the window upstairs. I couldn't see his face, because he stood under the trees, but he could never have stood so quiet and still if he'd been what you might call right-down intoxicated, miss."

"Did Miss Valland say he was intoxicated?" inquired Thir slowly, as if she were thinking the whole matter over.

"She said he'd been drinking, miss," replied Mrs. Fox, speaking as if she wished to be merciful to the absent; "and he had given her a rare scare, for sure! She looked just like death, miss—awful!"

"I don't believe he was the worse for drink," said Thir, speaking with decision, as if she had just arrived at a sudden conclusion. "I think Miss Valland was mistaken. You should not have allowed her to go along with him alone in that way, Mrs. Fox!"

"My goodness, miss, I should like to see anybody try to interfere with Miss Valland like that?" exclaimed Mrs. Fox, with a wide-eyed glance at Ursula, who nodded her head and pursed up her lips eloquently in reply. "Why, it's more than anybody in the parish dare do, except the Rector himself, miss! She goes her own way does Miss Valland; and a good way it is, too—I don't deny that. But I'd be sorry to be the one to try to move her when her mind is once set on a thing—as well try to move Gillian's Hood yonder with a penny cracker!"

"Well, Miss Valland has taken the responsibility," said Thir quietly; "and I have no wish to interfere, except for her own sake. Come, Sheelah, my doggie—it is time we got home! By-the-bye," she added, pausing on the way to the door, "would you mind telling me exactly what Miss Valland did say?"

"Not at all, miss! She just said that there was a man waiting outside who had been drinking and had drained himself of his last ha'penny. She said it was somebody she knew, and she wanted to send him back to his own people, and she hadn't got the money with her to pay his railway fare, and would I lend her two shillings? That was all, except that, when I asked if he wouldn't come in while I went for the money, she said he was ashamed of the state he was in, and he would rather keep out of sight."

"Thank you very much!" said Thir. "That alters everything. I did not know that she knew him. Good-bye, Mrs. Fox! Come, Sheelah! Now, Ursula, we must hurry! My aunts will be sending the town-crier round after me."

When they got back to the Rectory, they found Mr. Valland walking quietly up and down the garden path between the door and the gate.

"I thought my women folk had presented me with the key of the street," he murmured whimsically to Thir, while Ursula was unlocking the front-door. "I was beginning to wonder whether that masterful daughter of mine had taken the law into her own hands at last, and turned me out of the house for my sins! Now let me hear what all this excitement is about. And where is my rebellious offspring? And by-the-way, let me tell you how glad I am to see you out again at last! Come in and have a glass of wine, and tell me what has been happening."

But Thir would not delay her return home for another moment, and the Rector was resigning himself to going back with her at once, when the sound of wheels on the road attracted their attention, and the next moment Teddy Greenburg sprang out of his pony-cart and came hurrying up to where they stood in the open doorway.

"Well, I've found you at last!" he cried, too flurried apparently to be very ceremonious in his address. "And a nice job I've had, Miss Bright! Good evening, Mr. Valland! I was beginning to ask myself if you were all murdered inside here. I nearly hammered the door down ten minutes ago, and couldn't make anybody hear. Miss Bright, will you come back with me at once? Your aunts are nearly out of their senses with fright about you!"

"Yes—I reckoned they would be," returned Thir penitently, shaking hands quickly with the Rector as she spoke. "Ursula will tell you all about our adventure, Mr. Valland; I can't stay away from those poor little aunties of mine another moment. Now, Mr. Teddy, if you're going to be so good as to take me along! Don't ask me a single question, please," she went on, when Teddy had got her and Sheelah into the cart and taken his place beside her. "Just wait a minute or two longer; I shall have to tell my aunts all about it."

"Well, you've succeeded in giving us all a precious scare, at all events!" he muttered grumpily. "When I saw you standing there with the Rector, all safe and sound, I had a jolly queer feeling, I can tell you!"

Thir laughed, as if she thought he was only making fun, but she knew very well he was doing nothing of the kind. She was uncomfortably conscious of an undercurrent of tender feeling in his manner to her, though he would have scorned to admit the fact.

"You'd been gone only ten minutes when I got home," he continued, "and I started after you, expecting to overtake you at the corner. I couldn't make it out when I saw nothing of you all down the street, and I just rang at your aunt's gate to make sure you were all right. Well, there was a how-d'ye do then! And the cob has had a pretty warm time of it since. Why didn't you wait for me, Thir?"

But they were at the gate now, and Thir was busy calling out to her aunts in the doorway.

"I'm all right, Aunt Polly! Yes—I'm here, my dears—as safe and sound as ever I was in my life!"

"Oh, my dear!" cried Aunt Carry, hurrying down to put her trembling arms around Thir's neck.

"Oh, my dear!" tearfully echoed Miss Gunter, as she received her niece on the threshold. "What we have gone through in the last hour!"

"And it's all that officious boy's fault!" said Thir, hugging them both in turn and leaving off to shake her fist at Teddy in the background.

"If he hadn't been so desperately strict in the discharge of his duty, you would never have known anything about this mad escapade of mine till it was all over. Let me sit down, aunt Polly—I'm just fainting with fatigue—and then I'll tell you all about everything!"

"It is strange," observed Miss Caroline presently, when Thir's adventure had been listened to and discussed and wondered over, "that it should have been just at that place that it happened; for ever since Teddy came running up with his alarming inquiry, 'Were you at home?' I've never got the thought of that poor girl once out of my mind."

"The man must have been a stranger in these parts," remarked Teddy—"most likely a tramp who had crept into the old workman's shelter in the quarry to sleep off a heavy drinking bout, and was still half fuddled. You wouldn't have found any of the people in the neighborhood prowling about there at nightfall."

"That's so," agreed Thir. "All the same, Teddy, he isn't quite a stranger, because Dora Valland told Mrs. Fox that she knew him."

"Oh, Dora Valland knows all sorts of disreputable wretches!" rejoined Teddy. "And I believe she likes them a great deal better than she does her own kind. She'll hardly speak to a civilized being lately—she's busy from morning till night among laborers' cottages round about. She told my mother the other day that she did not mean to go to any dances this winter, because she could not spare the money for ball dresses—her poor people would want all she had to give them."

"It is very good of her," said Miss Gunter.

Thir laughed a soft pitiful laugh.

"Perhaps she has an extra load of sin to bear this winter," she observed. "Perhaps she is trying to balance her accounts by throwing in a few scraps of self-denial as make-weights. But I don't think that sort of self-denial eases the mind; there's too much of the buying-and-selling principle in it."

"Hush, Thirza, my dear!" Miss Gunter murmured gently; and Thir stopped, with a faint flush flickering for a moment in her pale cheeks.

"Won't you ask Teddy to stop to dinner aunt Polly?" she inquired, rising wearily from her low chair by the fire. "He is dining en garcon to-night; all the rest have gone to Carshalton."

But Teddy would not stay—"because of the cob," he said. Thir, however, thought it was rather because he saw how dead-beat she was; and in her heart she thanked him for his consideration, as she went straight off to bed, thoroughly worn out with her day of excitement.

* * * * * *

When Miss Valland arrived with her curious protege at the dreary platform of the desolate little railway station, which looked more dreary and desolate than usual just now, with its rows of rose trees standing gaunt and bare along its white wooden paling and its carpet of dead sycamore leaves, she looked carefully up and down its whole length, almost as if she expected to see some particular person there.

The very few people whom necessity had brought to the bleak little place on such a cold night were collected before the small grate in the booking office, keeping themselves as warm as adverse circum-

stances would admit, until the train they were awaiting was signaled.

Having satisfied herself that there was nobody on the platform, Miss Valland walked up to the extreme end, followed in perfect silence by her companion. There she left him while she went to the booking-office for his ticket, hastening back with feverish speed, as though she was afraid her charge might try to make his escape while her back was turned.

Nothing however seemed further from his thoughts. He stood motionless where she had left him, with his hands hanging down limply on either side, and his deep-set cavernous eyes fixed upon the dim white palings on the other side of the line. That was how Miss Valland found him when she came back with his ticket, and that was how he remained until the train came snorting and hissing up to the platform and roused him from his fit of abstraction.

"An empty carriage, if you can manage it, Mr. Caulfield," said Miss Valland, when the station-master came hurrying up, anxious to show a little polite attention to the clergyman's daughter.

He opened the door of the compartment next to the engine, and, when another third-class passenger showed a desire to share the carriage, he ordered him farther back. But Caulfield himself took a good look at this unknown friend of "t' passon's daughter," and, with all his knowledge of her saintly forbearance and goodness towards erring sinners, he was a good deal surprised at what he saw. When he had shut the door safely upon the uncouth-looking passenger and hastened away to look after the needs of others, Miss Valland put her white face almost within the carriage to speak her last words.

"You are absolutely certain that your vessel sails to-morrow?"

The man inside raised his shaggy head and looked at her with furtive restless eyes.

"Yes," he muttered hoarsely—"she sails to-morrow, right enough."

"And what is her name, again?"—"The Maria Kildred."

"And you will sail in her? Remember, you have promised!"

"I'll take an oath on it, if you like!"

She did not flinch at the coarse expression, but looked at him steadily as she answered—

"I would as soon take your word. Remember, too, that you have promised never to come back here—to Quilter's Common—again."

"I'll never set foot in the beastly hole as long as I live!" he muttered, showing such savagery in his tone and manner that most young women would have inevitably shrank from him or shown some sign of terror; but the cold white face at the window never faltered nor flinched.

"I should advise you not to do so for your own sake," she replied harshly. "But, whether you keep or break your word, be certain I will keep mine. As surely as you come here again, I will hand you over at once to the police! I am a woman who always adheres to what she says. Look at me and see if I look like it!"

"Yes—you look like it," he said, raising a shaking hand to push away a wisp of hair it had fallen over his eyes and gazing at her as if he saw her now for the first time. "You look as if you'd keep your word up to the very foot of the gallows, you do; there ain't no all-gone softness about you, there ain't!"

"No—there is not," she agreed, taking a step backward as the train began to move: "and it is as well you should know it, and feel how true it is; for, as to this matter, as surely as we live I will keep my word! Remember!"

She stood at the extreme end of the platform as the train bore him from her sight, with her white face gleaming at him through the darkness of the night, and one hand raised level with her shoulder, its palm towards him, in impressive warning.

And yet, implacable and relentless as she looked, she had no power to terrify him—a sweet winsome little face, with tender full lips and large soft brown eyes, which had looked at him steadily enough certainly, but without a trace of menace in their bright clear depths, without a sign of threat or evil intention in their gaze.

When Miss Valland came down to the door where the station master had been taking the tickets of the few people who had arrived by the train, he touched his hat.

"Another of your secret charities, miss?" he said, in a tone which implied respectful recognition of her unfailing goodness.

She smiled at him; and he was not sufficiently acute to see how utterly void of heart or soul was her smile.

"Yes, Mr. Caulfield—another of my little secrets," she replied.

"Well, it's just like you, miss," he declared warmly, "to come tramping all the way down here on such a night as this to see after a poor creature like yon!"

"You do well to call him a poor creature," she said thoughtfully—"a man without strength of will to keep straight! Poor wretch! Don't say anything about it outside, Mr. Caulfield. People are quite ready enough to lable me as eccentric without being told that I walk about with a drunken half-mad sailor."

"Trust me, miss!" he rejoined. "Not a word to a soul, miss! Will you let me send one of the porters as far as the turn with you? It's lonely till you get round the bend into the High street."

But she would not hear of that—the people who had just arrived by the train would be company enough, she said, and there was nobody about Quilter's Common who would harm her; to which the station master gave an enthusiastic assent, as he held his lamp to show her the steps leading down into the road, wishing her a "Good night" in which warm approval was blended with the highest respect.

"A good woman, if ever there was one!" he murmured as he went back to his snug fireside and his tea and buttered toast. "She's booked through to heaven safe enough, if anybody ever was!"

CHAPTER XVI.

IT was Christmas week, and the old Hall had not yet changed hands, and Tryan Cambray was eating his heart out in his dull lodgings in Hull. Sidney Poplett was still coming over to Quilter's Common once or twice a week—sometimes alone, sometimes with Captain Miller—with a quite persistence which made those who knew how matters stood heartily sorry for him; and the Rector was still quietly preparing his home for his new wife.

Thir was trying to persuade herself that this workaday world was not such a bad place, after all, and succeeding only so far as to persuade her aunts into the belief that she thought so. Dora Valland continued her hand-to-hand struggle with her higher nature, and was beginning to show signs, in her sunken cheeks and hollow eyes, of the wear and tear of the unceasing conflict. Sheelah was reconciled to her new home; and Thir's two kittens had grown into quite young cats.

During all this time the Fates had not once been kind enough to ordain a meeting between Thir and Tryan Cambray.

The Greenbury girls were calling at Dale Cottage, where they had gone to discuss a most exciting piece of news. The officers of Captain Miller's regiment were going to give a ball, in return for the great hospitality which had been showered upon them since their return from foreign service, and the invitation-lists were already in course of preparation.

"Captain Miller and Pops have been over about it this morning," said Muriel, looking quite pretty in her pleased excitement; "they wanted to know how many girls the mother could muster. Pops ran down to the Rectory to ask Dora, but she refused point-blank; and poor Pops came back very down-hearted, although in a state of speechless admiration over her saintly goodness. It's funny—isn't it, Miss Gunter?—though I used to think ever so much more of Dora before her goodness became so obtrusive!"

"Oh, never mind about Dora," interposed Jean brusquely; "we came to talk about Thir! Mother wants to take her in her party, Miss Gunter—that is, of course, if you don't care about going yourselves. Mother said she thought you wouldn't."

"My dear girl, no!" replied Miss Gunter decisively. "Caroline and I gave up that sort of thing when we came here thirteen years ago. My sister must speak for herself, but I don't think I should care to begin again now."

"No, indeed," agreed Miss Carry. "I buried my love of dancing years and years ago, along with the other pleasant follies of youth."

"Then you will come with my mother, Thir?" said Muriel eagerly. "Oh, don't say you won't!" she cried, reading dissent in Thir's uninterested face. "Don't say you won't go at all! It will be the best ball that has been given in Hull for years!"

"Hull," exclaimed Thir, with a sudden change in her face and manner which was inexplicable to at least two of her companions—"Hull, Muriel? Will the ball take place in Hull?"

"Yes in the Town Hall. They are having it there because the hotel accommodation is so much better than at Beverley; and there will be plenty of people who would not care for the long drive in and out on a cold night in January. Oh, Thir, it is going to be so jolly! They are set on making it a huge success. Tryan told Teddy yesterday that the Hull people are all talking about it already. He said he should make use of the occasion to say farewell to his friends, as it would most likely be his last public appearance in the old country. You ought to go, if only to wish him 'Bon voyage,' Thir."

"Yes—I suppose I ought," she replied very quietly. She had got quite used by now to talking of him as calmly as if he were the mere acquaintance he was generally supposed to be.

"He and I were great cronies during the short time we met each other, you know, Muriel. I think I should like to shake hands with him before he goes, and wish him God-speed in his new life. Do you know when he sails?"

"He himself doesn't know yet," said Muriel. "It seems there is some hitch in the signing of the contracts over the sale of the Hall. You know what lawyer-folk are—so dilatory!"

"I suppose they are," observed Thir, with an admirable assumption of indifference. "Aunt Polly, what do you think about this ball?"

Miss Gunter looked at her niece in a manner that was understood by that young lady; and Miss Caroline joined in the silent protest. They were both thinking the same thing—that it was a pity the poor child should risk her hardly-won peace of mind by a meeting with Tryan; but they could not openly say so.

"If it's the expense you are thinking of," said Thir, "I've a gown I could make do——"

"No, Thirza," remonstrated Miss Gunter—"you know very well——"

"Oh, well, then," said Thir mischievously, "if it is not the expense, I think I shall go! I haven't put my foot to the floor for two years—I should enjoy a dance; and I should like to air a certain little frock of maize colored gauze that I have upstairs."

"That is delightful!" exclaimed Jean. "Mother will be so glad! Muriel and I are going to wear pale blue, with panels of gold braiding. All shades of pink and red must be tabooed because of the red coats."

"That's just so!" agreed Thir, setting herself resolutely to take part in the inevitable discussion on dress which she saw coming, though her mind was full of the possible meeting with Tryan, and she would have given worlds to go away by herself and think it over. How could she give a decision upon the relative merits of eau-de-Nil and turquoise blue as a contrast to the background of scarlet tunics, when her ears were ringing with the one short sentence, "I shall see him"?

During the preparation for the ball Thir succeeded once again in thoroughly astonishing her elder aunt. Since her arrival at Quilter's Common she had shown such a lack of personal vanity that it almost amounted to negligence; but now she suddenly betrayed a strong desire to look her very best, and spent as much time over the details of her toilette as the vainest of young women could have done.

"It is because I am so fully aware of the falling-off in my looks, Aunt Polly," she declared, when she was twitted with this development of an unsuspected vice. "I was never a beauty in my best days, but now I am a positive fright! And you mustn't be hard on me because I am anxious to repair the ravages of time with the appliances of art."

Miss Gunter laughed at the whimsical quotation, and Miss Carry smiled, too; but Thir saw that the younger aunt had divined the secret of her sudden attack of vanity.

"I don't think you need worry yourself much about your looks, my love," she whispered a little later, when Miss Gunter's attention was bestowed elsewhere; "you are quite as pretty as you ever were, Thir—prettier, I think. If your eyes don't sparkle quite as they used to do, they are more loving and tender, little girl! Don't torment yourself with fancying that people will find you are gone off; they will think you sweeter than ever, my dear!"

"What a jewel of an auntie you are!" murmured Thir gratefully. "You always know just what to say to cheer one up!"

Miss Caroline answered the sly pressure of the girl's hot little hand, and made some excuse to go upstairs, that Thir might not see the tears in her sympathetic eyes. It was all such plain reading to her, this sad little drama; for had she not taken part herself in just such another fourteen years ago?

Miss Caroline's prophecy proved true to the very letter. Whether it was that Thir had selected her toilette with perfect tact, or whether it was that excitement and anticipation had for the time restored her old vivacity and animation, the result was that, in her ball dress of soft maize color, veiled in clouds of silken tulle, relieved by pliant tendrils of tinted Virginian creeper, softly aglow with its lovely autumn coloring, she looked the brilliant witching Thir of the past, but with an indescribable softening and deepening of the expression about her eyes and lips which intensified a thousandfold the charm of the small mechanectes which were her second nature and clung to her through all her troubles.

Ever afterwards Thir remembered that ball, with its strange mixture of enjoyment and pain and longing. She was by no means one of the recognized belles of the occasion; there were very many girls present who, as Teddy Greenbury said, "could have given her a long start as far as figure or features were concerned."

But then, as Major Darncombe answered at once, "There was something about her that was more fetching than all the straight noses and fine shoulders in Christendom." And so it came about that, greatly to Mr. Greenbury's satisfaction, Thir was one of the "successes" of the night.

And through it all, through the dainty fencing with her flock of would-be partners, the gay repartee she dealt around with such a lavish hand, the quick play of eyes and lips, there was a voice saying all the time, "Where is he?" and refusing to be silenced, try what charm she would. Perhaps it was this under-current of deeper feeling which gave the delicate touch to her brilliant gaiety.

"She is simply exquisite!" Major Darncombe announced to Mrs. Greenburg, with enthusiasm. "She is all brilliance and sparkle, and at the same time all warmth and softness, like the glow of a flawless ruby! Mrs. Greenburg, I confess to you that I am snared with my eyes open—trapped and snared, forty-two, by a slip of a girl not out of her teens—trapped by a pair of brilliant brown eyes and a yellow frock trimmed with speckled red leaves!"

Mrs. Greenbury smiled pleasantly, What a grand party this would be for little Thir, this great, handsome, honest-looking gentleman, with his excellent position and his well-known goodness of heart!

"I think that is rather unfair to Miss Bright," she observed gently. "The dress is charming enough, certainly, but Thir is just as charming in her serge morning-gown; and, what is more, she is always cherry and always sweet-tempered. She is one of the dearest little girls I know!"

"She looks it!" declared the Major, with conviction. "Heigh-ho, it makes one sigh for one's lost youth to see all those boys around her!"

"There is, at any rate, safety in a multitude," remarked Mrs. Greenbury, with an air of innocent candor. "If it were some one particular boy, now!"—and she paused in a way which finished the sentence more eloquently than any words could have done.

"Is there not one particular boy, then?" inquired her companion. "Surely there must be, with such eyes as those!"

"Not yet, I believe. She came to England only last summer, and at Quilter's Common she saw scarcely a creature."

"Ah, she is a neighbor of yours, then? Oh, bother—this is the lancers! I must look up my partner. Au revoir!"

Mrs. Greenbury looked decidedly pleased as she watched the broad-shouldered Major cross the room. Thir was such a dear little soul; and she believed she had heard somewhere that those nice little women at Dale Cottage had only life-interests in their property! How delightful it would be if Major Darncombe—— But at that moment her reverie was broken by the sight of Jean coming towards her, with half a yard of loose flouncing festooned over her arm, which meant a visit to the dressing room for repairs.

No 11, the last dance but one before supper, Thir was dancing with Captain Miller. She had almost given up all hopes of Tryan now, and so, when, in a pause for breath, she suddenly caught sight of him standing in the draped doorway, the shock to her highly-strung nerves was so great that she nearly cried out with the pain. He was so changed, his face was so thin and so "aged," that the sight of her own less changed face in the mirror at his side overwhelmed her with a sense of her heartlessness. How lonely he looked, standing there by himself, pale and grave, while everybody else was so gay!

"Captain Miller," she exclaimed impetuously, "please do me a favor! I want you to give up the rest of this dance."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

MAIDENHOOD.

BY LOUISE MALCOM STENTON.

Oh! Allie is a lovely girl—
  Of that bewitching age—
That charms the eye, the mind and heart
  When turning Youth's first page.

From childhood upward, one short step,
  To maidenhood so sweet—
So full of fairy dreams of Love,
  To make her life complete!

Ah! Allie dear, I'm full of fear,
  Lest you may dream of bliss,
That rarely comes to mortals here,
  In such a world as this!

Where Sorrow, Pain, and vanished Hope
  So often banish dreams,
And fairy visions, full of joy
  But nought proves what it seems.

The Ace of Hearts.

BY J. S. F.

I WAS just starting my professional career, and it was necessary to secure a convenient office. I did not want anything pretentious—an office for myself and a small ante-chamber for the boy whom I had engaged as clerk of all work would amply suit my requirements.

I had served my articles with an old-fashioned firm of solicitors in the city, and had been accustomed to great rooms filled with calf-bound volumes, shelves of ancient parchment, and I laughed to think of the difference there must be between the little office I had in my mind's eye and the big place where I had learned my law.

Nevertheless I was well content to make a small beginning, and to trust the future for bringing me an increase of business and of fortune.

Perhaps because I had two or three professional friends thereabouts, I selected Holborn as being a lively spot wherein to pitch my tent. After a good deal of looking about me, I decided to apply to an agent, with whom I went to inspect a place he recommended, a third floor of Parchment Buildings.

"Here you are, sir," said the agent, unlocking the door of the office on the third floor. "This is a sort of clerk's office; the principal room is beyond it, and looks out into Parchment Passage, as I told you. Nice situation this, ain't it?"

I walked in and inspected both rooms before answering him. As regarded size and situation they were certainly all that I wanted. The outer office would do very well for my boy-clerk, and the inner would suit me. Nevertheless it was evident that a good deal of cleaning would have to be done before anybody could tenant either room. Two years at least had passed since the rooms were placed in the agent's books.

I said that the rooms would suit me providing that the rent was not excessive. Therewith we fell a-bargaining, and eventually hit on terms which met my approval. A week later I was in full occupancy of my offices. My boy-clerk sat at a little desk in the outer office and pretended to work very hard, while I sat at a big desk in my own sanctum and read law. There was really little else to do in those early days.

I sent in my own office appointments, and spent two or three days in seeing them put straight. Wanting some place in which to store a quantity of old books and papers, I had a cupboard cleared of a quantity of rubbish evidently left there by the last tenant. It contained a vast amount of old letters, invoices and papers, but these had been torn into small scraps and thrown into a corner. The woman who cleaned my rooms complained a good deal about the mess caused by these scraps of paper.

In reply to my inquiries, the woman told me that it would be about three years since the rooms had been occupied. Further interrogated, she said that she could not remember the last tenant's name. It was something foreign, and she did not know how to pronounce it. She did not know what his business was. He was always writing, she said, and sometimes had other foreigners to see him. His name was never painted up on the door of his rooms nor on the lintel down below, and it was her belief that he was no good because he kept himself so quiet. While the woman talked she was engaged in removing the mass of torn and scattered paper from the cupboard. Suddenly she detached something from the contents of her basket and handed it to me.

"He got that the very day he went away," said she. "For I remember going down and fetching his letters from the box in the hall below. The first thing he took out of 'em was that there card, and he laid it down on his desk and stared at it as if he couldn't make it out. That's it, sure enough; though I ain't never set eyes on it since. 'Spect he chucked it away with this here heap o' letters and papers."

I took the thing from her and looked at it. It was one of a pack of cards, the Ace of Hearts, and would have attracted no attention from anybody but for one slight fact. Through the crimson heart in the centre of the white card some hand had drawn a stiletto with scrupulous fidelity. I had to look at it narrowly to make sure that the stiletto had not been engraved with the red heart. Engraved, however, it had not been; the trace of the artist's pencil was clear enough.

I took possession of the card and put it aside. During the somewhat lazy time which followed I often looked at it and wondered what it signified. I could not help fancying that it had conveyed some sinister message to the man who had occupied my rooms three years previously. Certainly he had left his chambers hurriedly immediately after the receipt of it. I came to the conclusion that my predecessor in the offices in Parchment Passage had been engaged in some mysterious transactions of a not altogether safe nature, and had been warned to go elsewhere by the transfixed Ace of Hearts.

It was spring when I entered into the occupancy of my office, and the year went by very quietly until winter set in. My practice had been remarkably limited at first, but as the months went by I obtained an increase of work, and had less time to spend in reading my calf-bound volumes. The first day of December brought me a case which promised to produce something considerable, and I remained late and went on reading until a slight sound on the landing outside made me look up, only to catch sight of the clock, which indicated a late hour of the evening.

Lifting the lamp from my desk I made my way to the door and suddenly flung it open. Then I started with amazement, for there on the landing before me, his face and figure clearly seen in the lamplight, stood a man, tattered, sickly-looking, and more disconcerted than myself. A man of middle age apparently, and showing more than usual signs of wear and tear at that, for his dark hair was plentifully shot with gray, and his pallid face was deeply lined and seamed. My first glance at him showed me two things—that he was a foreigner and in want.

I was so much astonished at the sight of this unexpected visitor that I stood staring at him for a minute or two. He, on his part, stood staring at me. At last I found my tongue.

"Are you looking for some one?" said I, lamely enough. "I don't think you'll find any one in at this time."

He shook his head.

"No," he answered. "No—at least I was looking for you."

"For me? Why?"

"Will you let me come in for a moment?" he said. "Only for a moment if please. Oh, there's no need to be afraid of me. I'm not dangerous, though I daresay I look so."

I hesitated. He looked at me again, and said quietly:

"I used to live in these rooms."

"Oh," said I, dimly comprehending that the mysterious tenant stood before me. "Come in."

He followed me through the outer office into my own room. When he saw the cheery fire, the comfortable arm-chair by the hearth, and the supper tray laid on the side-table, he sighed. It struck me that perhaps he was both cold and hungry, and I invited him to eat. But at that he shook his head.

"I had better tell you what I want first," said he. "I have been on the stairs outside for more than an hour wondering whether you would allow me to enter this room. You see I used to live here, and I left very suddenly about three years ago. I daresay," he added, "the other people wondered why I left so suddenly."

I quietly opened the drawer of my desk in which I had placed the mysterious Ace of Hearts, and drawing it forth, laid it before him.

"Had that anything to do with it?" I said.

He started to his feet as his eyes fell on the card, and I saw great beads of perspiration burst across his forehead under the shock which the sight of the mysterious emblem undoubtedly gave him. He looked from it to me, and from me to the card again, then he sighed heavily and sat down.

"Where did you get that?" he asked quietly.

"It was found amongst a heap of torn papers which you, I think, had thrown into the cupboard yonder. May I inquire what this means?" I said. "Is it some signal, or a warning, or a secret message? I suppose it had a meaning for you at the time you received it."

"It had a meaning," he answered. "It meant that my life was not worth an hour's purchase—that I had been sentenced to death—that the executioners were on my track. I am a Russian, and familiar with the doings of conspirators from my youth. What I have just told you is true. I was agent of a secret society here. I offended those in power. I was condemned: and that's the warning."

"So you fled?"

"More fool I! I fled—to come back at last as you see me. A beggar almost—starving, homeless."

Again I pressed him to eat. I was fascinated by his story, and wished to hear more.

"Not till I have told you why I came here to-night. I came to recover something that I left when I fled. I left it because I knew it was safe in the hiding-place I had contrived for it. I was going I knew not whither—possibly into rough places and amongst desperate men. I came here to London at last, and a great longing came over me to see it once more. That is why I came to your door to-night, resolved to ask you to admit me. The picture is here, and I shall find it."

He rose, and crossing the room approached a corner of the floor and carefully removed the carpet which I had had laid down. Lifting a loose board underneath, he presently withdrew from the cavity a parcel wrapped in many sheets of strong paper, and came forward to the light again.

"You did not know that you had this so near you," he said, blowing the dust away from the parcel and proceeding to unwind the various wrappings. "And now, look!"

An exclamation of wonder and delight burst from my lips. He held before me the portrait of a young and lovely woman, evidently the work of some great miniature painter, and framed heavily in gold and jewels. The frame must have been worth a small fortune in itself, and yet I scarcely noticed it, so beautiful was the face it contained.

The stranger held the picture from him and looked steadily at it in the lamp-light. Then he drew it nearer and kissed the face reverently.

"She is dead," he said. "And she died a martyr. She was born to all that the world calls good; she died an exile and in poverty. She was my sister."

He restored the frame to its wrappings and fastened it up again, and rather against my recommendation placed it in its old hiding-place. He refused my offer of supper, and said he had no more to tell.

With that he bowed, shrugged his shoulders, and went out. I followed him to the head of the staircase and watched him descend. Then something prompted me to open the window and watch him leave the house by the front door.

He came out and walked up the passage into Holborn. I was about to shut the window and return to my room, when I saw two men steal out of a neighboring door-way and follow my visitor. So swift and stealthy were their movements that I had no time to cry out before they had vanished.

I locked up my office and went home, much excited by the events of the evening. I had never had an adventure of such a startling description before, and had never expected to find that my little shabby office contained within it all the elements of a romance. I went to bed, and could not sleep for thinking of it. I was sorry by that time that I had allowed my strange visitor to leave the portrait in my room, and I determined to do something towards finding him and compelling him to remove it.

I went to my office next morning by way of Long Acre. Passing the corner of one of the squalid streets leading towards Drury Lane, I became aware of a small crowd of people gathered outside a house and doing their best to obtain an entry thereto, despite the presence of two or three burly policemen. I went up, and knowing one of the latter, inquired the reason of the commotion.

"It's a murder, sir," said he. "And a very rum murder it is, too. Foreign chap found in this here empty house, stabbed through the heart. Like to go in, sir? There's the coroner's officer and the superintendent inside just now. This way, sir. Now then, make way, there! this here gentleman's an official."

I followed the man inside into a small room destitute of furniture. They had fetched a bench from somewhere and laid the dead man on it. Somehow I was not surprised when I saw him. I had felt certain from the first I was going to see my strange visitor of the previous evening. And there he lay before me, dead for many hours, the doctor said, with a dagger driven into his heart through a card on which the Ace of Hearts was still recognisable in spite of the blood that had dyed it.

"A foreigner," said the doctor. "This is the work of some of those accursed secret societies."

I went on to my office. My boy met me at the foot of the stairs with a scared look on his face.

"If you please, sir," said he, "I think there's been thieves in. The door was burst open when I came with the key this morning."

I ran upstairs into my room. Everything was in order there. I went straight to the corner, and tore away the carpet and the loose board, and examined the cavity beneath. My hands met nothing. The portrait was gone!

To say that I felt a strange sense of alarm on finding the portrait, to which recent events had attached such tragic memories, was gone, is needless.

I thought it best to tell the police all I knew. The officials at Scotland Yard to whom I unbosomed myself received my story with interest, but not with surprise. They were too well accustomed to the dark methods and deeds of the secret societies, whose members flee to London when the greater continental cities are forbidden them. Nevertheless, my story did nothing to help them. Indeed, I was told that the perpetrators of these secret murders were seldom found out.

Several months passed away. The cares of business were beginning to press on me, and I had little time in which to speculate on the late mysterious events. I had my first important case in hand, and it required every moment and every thought.

I was glad when the courts rose and the long vacation came to bring me a brief holiday. I had won my case, and had gained no small amount of present fame and future gain by doing so. About the second week in August I traveled down to Hull; and thence took steamer to Stavanger for a month in Norway.

Coming back by the same route, I found it necessary to stay a night in Hull, and as I had never been there before, I spent the evening in looking round the docks and quays of that ancient port. There I came across a further link in this remarkable story.

Wandering along the pavement of the quay which runs from the town to the river, I paused to look in at the window of one of those little dirty shops where marine store dealers gather together all manner of odds and ends, and what was my surprise to see the portrait which had once been hidden in my office!

I paused and looked again through the dirty window. No, there was no doubt about it: that was the portrait. The gold frame was gone, and there were marks on the edges of the picture which seemed to indicate that it had been roughly removed. The face, however, was unmistakable. I had been too much struck by it at first sight to forget its wonderful beauty.

On entering the shop a dirty-looking man, evidently a foreigner, came forward from some den in the rear, rubbing his hands and asking what he could do for me.

"Nothing particular," I answered. "I just wish to glance at your stock of curiosities. I am rather fond of picking up rare articles."

He answered that I was welcome to look round, and went on to say that he had some beautiful things in the way of binocular glasses and chronometers if I was thinking of taking a long voyage.

While he chattered volubly about his goods I was leaning over the little partition which separated the shop from the window, examining the portrait from a better point of vantage. I had now no doubt whatever as to its identity, and determined to buy it at whatever cost. After some haggling, I purchased the picture and a Turkish dagger for one guinea.

When I reached the hotel I went up to my room and examined the portrait carefully. It was a small canvas, stretched on a frame twelve inches by nine, and across the back, probably with the idea of keeping out dust and dirt, a stout piece of

rough canvas had been tightly stretched and stitched. There was nothing to show that any extraordinary history was attached to the picture. I returned to London and locked up the portrait in my office safe.

Time went on, and as my practice increased, I took more rooms in the house in Parchment Passage. Some of them were much more suitable for a private office than the one in which the portrait had been hidden, but I determined to remain in the latter, and devote the others to my clerks. I had a half-superstitious feeling that if ever the mystery of the previous tenant came to be solved, it would be in that room.

It was about two years after the murder, and circumstances then required that I should stay late at the office. I was engaged in settling some difficult business with a client, and he remained with me until half-past nine o'clock. As I was about to turn out the lamp which burned on my table, I heard some one coming slowly up the staircase.

I had left the private door of my office open, and could hear the sound distinctly. I turned up the light again, and waited. At first I thought the steps were those of my client, who had possibly forgotten something and was returning, but another moment told me they were not. He was a young, active man, likely to come up three steps at a bound; the man now climbing the stairs was evidently neither young nor active, for he came slowly and apparently with some difficulty.

I went to the door and looked down at the landing. The gas still burned there, and it shone on the figure of a man who was climbing the last flight of stairs. He was a tall, well-built man of fine proportions, but something about the stoop of his shoulders suggested hardship and privation.

I could see very little of his face, but I noticed that his beard, which was of unusual length, was gray almost to whiteness. He seemed to be well dressed, and I made up my mind that his intentions were peaceful.

The stranger accosted me in very good English. Somehow I had made up my mind that he was a foreigner. After he had explained his business, which was to find Alexis Vitrefsky of 3 Parchment Passage, a light began to break in upon me. The man he was in search of was the previous tenant! Perhaps the mystery of the portrait was about to be explained.

"Was the person you are in search of a Russian?" I asked.

"Yes, yes," he answered eagerly. "Certainly, a Russian. A man of about my own age, but perhaps younger in appearance. I have had things to make me look old."

"Will you come in a moment?" I said, and led the way into my office. "Perhaps I can give you some information."

I gave him a chair, and he sat down. Now that the lamp-light fell full on his face, I saw that he was an extraordinary handsome man, and that evident suffering and privation had not robbed him of his good looks.

"I shall be very grateful for any information respecting Alexis," said he. "And I thank you in anticipation. Perhaps I ought to tell you who I am. I am the Prince Z——."

He mentioned a name which made me stare with astonishment. Prince Z—— was an escaped political prisoner, who, after spending many years in the Siberian mines, had escaped in a singularly daring fashion, and had recently published a narrative of his adventures and sufferings.

I sat down and told Prince Z—— all that I knew of Alexis Vitrefsky; how he had suddenly left the very room in which we were then sitting, and had returned to it two years later under mysterious circumstances.

I told him of the events of that night; how two men had watched Alexis leave my office, and how the unfortunate man had been murdered during the night, and the portrait stolen from its hiding place. He heard me with anxiety and disturbance, and when I told him that the portrait was gone, he rose up and paced the floor in evident distress.

"Then I am indeed ruined!" said he. "Sir, that portrait meant everything to me. It was indeed the property of Alexis, but its possession meant more to me and to my children than I can tell you. But I see you do not understand me. With your permission, I will narrate to you certain passages in my sad history."

I was half-tempted, on seeing his distress, to tell him how strangely I had recovered the portrait; but I refrained, remembering that he might, after all, be an impostor, and that it would be better for me to hear his story before I told mine. I therefore begged him to proceed.

"It is not a pleasant story," said he, "that I have to tell you. As you know, I am of the new party in Russia. Since boyhood I have worked, planned, and suffered for my country, and in consequence I have been hated by those in power.

"Until some years ago, however, I was allowed to pursue my own course in comparative freedom. Now and then the police warned me that I was approaching too near the line in my writings; but as I happened to belong to one of the best families, and was rich and powerful, I was practically allowed to go on in my own way. At last, however, I found that neither my noble name nor my riches were to help me.

"Information reached me that I was to be arrested and severely dealt with. Fortunately I had been somewhat prepared. My wife was in Paris; my two young sons were at school in Germany.

"I had secured to them a moderate sum in case anything happened to me. I had never dreamt that all I had would be confiscated. Such, however, was to be the case, according to my informant's news, which had come from the highest source. I was to be stripped of land and goods and reduced to beggary.

"I hurriedly consulted with Alexis Vitrefsky, an old student-friend of mine, as to what should be done. He was then unknown to the authorities, and was about to start for a tour in England. We went to an English banker in St. Petersburg, and by his advice I turned all my negotiable securities into English notes. The good banker gave me fifty English notes of a thousand pounds each for my papers. These I handed to Alexis. He was to carry them to England and preserve them until I could join him. I was watched, but I hoped to escape.

"Alexis was puzzled how to carry the notes. If he had them about his person he might be searched, and awkward questions as to his right to them put to him. People bound on a three months' European tour do not usually carry fifty thousand pounds' worth of English notes with them.

"Alexis, however, quickly solved the difficulty. It was his practice to carry with him wherever he went the portrait of his dead sister, whom he regarded with feelings of absolute veneration. She, like myself, had engaged in the new movement, and she had suffered. Alexis brought his cherished portrait, handsomely mounted in gold, to my house. We placed the notes behind the canvas, and stitched a strong piece of coarse cloth across the frame, so that none could see where the notes lay hid. Knowing that Vitrefsky was my true friend, and that he would take care of the portrait, I felt my little fortune to be safe.

"Alexis left for England, and within a few days of his departure I was arrested. I spent some weary years in the fortress of St. Peter and Paul; subsequently I was sent to the mines. But before I left the fortress I had news of Alexis. By means of those trusted messengers who are to be met with even amongst the government officials, he contrived to send me a cipher letter, telling me that he was living in London, and giving this house as his address. Whenever I was free I was to come here to receive the sum I had entrusted to him.

"I have told you all. I am free, and I have come here, only to find that Alexis is murdered and the portrait gone."

I was so convinced that the prince was telling me the truth, that I no longer hesitated about handing the portrait over to him. Before doing so, however, I asked him one more question.

"Pardon me," I said, "but what of your wife and boys?"

He shook his head.

"My wife died during my imprisonment," he answered. "My boys are living here in London. Poor lads, they had met with indifferent treatment in Germany, and I fear that they will find life hard, now that I have no means of helping them."

"Then your estates were confiscated?"

"Everything I had was confiscated. When I finally escaped I was absolutely penniless."

I went to my safe and took the portrait from the drawer in which I had placed it on my return to Hull. Without saying a word, I handed it to the Prince, who received it with an expression of the utmost astonishment.

'See if your money is still there,' said I.

"I have no doubt of it," he answered, as he cut away the stitches from the canvas back. "But how did the picture come into your possession? You told me it had been stolen."

I told him how I had found the portrait in the shop at Hull, and had recognised it again. When I talked, he turned back the canvas and discovered the bank notes securely wrapped in folds of paper, exactly as he had described. His delight at finding himself once more wealthy was wonderful to witness.

"Poor Alexis!" he said, suddenly remembering the friend to whom he had trusted his sole resources.

"I have my own theory as to his death. I have heard that he became closely connected with one of the more determined secret societies, and had the ill-fortune to break with certain of its most powerful members. These people never forget. Alexis was probably tracked down to the very last."

"But the portrait?" I said. "Why should the murderers steal that?"

The prince shrugged his shoulders.

"Ah," said he; "probably while Alexis was conversing with you in here and showing you the portrait and its valuable frame, the two men told off to kill him were watching you. Of course they stole the portrait for the sake of the frame."

The explanation seemed a likely one. I remembered that there had been nothing to prevent Vitrefsky's assassins from following him up the stairs that night, or from listening at the open door while he conversed with me.

Prince Z—— carried his bank notes away with him. He wished to reward me, saying that but for me the money would have been lost to him. The only reward I could consent to take, however, was the picture. That I kept, and still possess, a memento of what I think a remarkable romance.

Prince Z—— now resides permanently in London, prematurely aged by the trials of his past life, but undisturbed, so far as I know, by government spies or the emissaries of secret societies.

CORRAN WAYS.—Both Corean women and men wear their hair in thick plaits; the former wrap their pigtails lightly round their heads, the latter keep their long plaits hanging down until they enjoy the dignified position of being engaged to be married, on which auspicious occasion the Corean groom partly shaves his head, twists up his pigtail into a queer little top-knot, and indulges his fancy in the latest and strangest variety of hats ever designed for man.

Up to this time his head has been hatless. Coreans are engaged to be married as early as their parents can arrange the business part of the transaction satisfactorily. In many ways they resemble the Chinese much more than the Japanese. Unlike the Japanese, they keep their wearing apparel exquisitely clean; they are constantly washing their entire wardrobes. With the Japanese the order of things is reversed; they indulge in three or four baths a day, but even the garments worn next their skin are seldom washed.

The Corean method of ironing is more injurious to clothes than even a steam laundry. The clothes are thumped with wooden rollers and flat boards until a polish is produced. The heaviest expense to a Corean man in life are his laundress' destructiveness, his pipe, and his hat.

CONDUCTIVITY OF THE NERVES.—The rate of motion in the motor nerves of the frog is 90 feet per second, and in those of man 111.1 feet per second. If 111 feet per second be taken as the average movement for the motor nerves, and 140 for the sensors, we have a very slow rate of transmission compared with that of light, 196,000 miles per second, and that of electricity, 97,500 miles per second. A telegraphic message to America is transmitted as rapidly as a nerve message from the head to the foot.

BRAINS.—A brain attains its highest utility, as distinguished from its highest development, observes a medical contemporary, when it can not only absorb from others and direct its own further evolutions, but can also organize and regulate the working of other brains under its own superintendence and control. This power it is which enables the rising merchant or manufacturer to utilise other brains, either to use them for purposes of comparative mental drudgery, or to perform higher work under the immediate superintendence of the ruling brain. By such means the single brain can multiply its work indefinitely by a well-selected series of other brains under itself, a few brains of comparatively high order regulating the working of numerous brains of a lower order, which perform the purely mechanical mental work. Such is the organization of a first rate business in full working order.

Scientific and Useful.

BICYCLES.—The cycles in use in the French army are to be provided with an electric light which can be turned on and off at will.

ALUMINUM.—The French state railroads are about to build passenger cars in which the parts usually made of iron and copper will be made of aluminum. The axles and wheels, however, will continue to be made of steel.

GLYCERINE IN GLUE.—A little glycerine added to gum or glue is a great improvement, as it prevents either becoming brittle. It also prevents gummed labels from having a tendency to curl up when being written on.

BY LIGHT.—Dr. A. Graham Bell describes in the current issue of Progress of the World a device by which he transmits sounds and ordinary conversation along a sunbeam, in the same way that one now uses a telephone wire.

PICTURE REPRODUCTION.—Artist Hubert Herkomer has devised a new process of reproducing pictures without the intervention of photography. He painted Dr. Jameson's portrait in monochrome on a copper plate and then covered the painting with a certain fine bronze powder, which hardened the surface and permitted an immediate electrotype to be taken from it.

STOVE POLISH.—A good durable waterproof liquid stove polish is made of purified black lead (graphite) reduced to a very fine powder, one pound; perchloride of iron, half an ounce. Moisten with just enough water to form a stiff paste, and mix intimately by trituration in a mortar, and gradually add water sufficient to reduce the paste to a thin cream. Shake before using.

SHIPS.—A process is being tried, with considerable success, for electroplating ships' bottoms with copper. This is accomplished by means of flexible, watertight baths, about four feet square and six inches deep, held by props against the sheathing of the vessel. The solution is pumped into these baths from a great vat, and the electrical connection completed through the boat and the vat.

Farm and Garden.

POULTRY.—An excellent breakfast is made for poultry by scalding together some middlings and bran, then add vegetable parings, and scraps of meat, bread and vegetables from the table. Before their bed time give them a hearty meal of grain, wheat, oats, barley or corn.

EGGS.—There is a difference of 30 per cent. between the prices of strictly fresh eggs and those that are lined or kept in cold storage. It is doubtful if it will pay to keep eggs for a rise in prices unless in those sections where they cannot be sold nearer the source of production. Eggs command higher prices in proportion to their cost than anything else produced on the farm.

SLUGS AND SNAILS.—Slugs and snails may be destroyed as follows. Put small heaps of bran—about two handfuls—close to the plants which they destroy most. About ten or eleven o'clock at night go round and put a handful of quicklime on each heap; the number of slugs found killed in the morning will be almost incredible. Slugs prefer bran to any fruit or vegetable, and will congregate on these heaps from all parts of the garden.

THE DAIRY.—Not the least of the economies of the winter dairy is the fact that as now demonstrated, the milch cow will actually do better and produce better on the more rough foods, like corn fodder, roots and the like, with corn and cob meal combined with some oil meal and the like, than upon fine and more costly market hay, and this gives the farmer a chance to turn these bulky, unsalable feeds into the finest of foods for humanity, and more, gives him employment in the winter, and in his interesting and profitable work he finds little time to yearn for a seat in the Legislature. The winter dairy has a place in the farmer's farm work, and there should be little abandonment of the industry, for the man who so does will soon regret his decision. Better keep at it.

A HARD COUGH distresses the patient and racks both Lungs and Throat. Dr. D. Jayne's Expectorant is the remedy wanted to cure your Cough, and relieve both the Pulmonary and Bronchial organs. The best family Pill, Jayne's Painless Sugar-Coated Sanative.

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST
FOUNDED, A.D. 1821

ISSUED WEEKLY AT 726 SANSOM ST.

A. E. SMYTHE, Publisher.

PHILADELPHIA, FEBRUARY 15, 1896.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION.
[IN ADVANCE.]

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Of Politeness.

There are those who, not without reason, would derive "politeness" and "civility" from the same word. A civil person is one who, having dwelt amongst men, is decent and becoming in his behavior, and gives to each man the honor due to him. A polite person—we so refine with our words—is somewhat more than civil. He puts an extra polish on his manners, and is scarcely content with being civil. A polite man wishes to convey to you that he is polite.

One authority goes on to say that politeness springs from education, that it is the offspring of refinement, and that it may be a substitute for civility. That may be. A bad man may be civil; and there is a curt civility which is intensely irritating.

Pride is never more biting, cruel, and offensive, than when, to cut more deeply, it condescends to be civil. There are words which rankle through life—the words of some rich lady to a milliner, of a mother to her daughter, who has married beneath her, of a mistress to her servant, of a woman to her despised lover; and these are civil words. They are polished, even like the barbed heads of arrows, that they may enter the more deeply. They have all the outward seeming of politeness, and yet they are rude and cruel as the angry and restless waves, storm-beaten into hungry fury. "Be ye angry, and sin not," says St. Paul. One would rather encounter plenty of cruel scolding than those more cruel words.

We are thus particular about words because they are living things, so long as a nation has any mind; and because, to understand a subject well, it must at first be well defined.

We have a perfect scale of words to signify simply the manner of bearing of one man or woman towards another. There is first "civil," then "obliging," then "polite," and lastly "complaisant." Civil regards the manner, obliging the action; politeness is a general polish throughout, and complaisant goes perhaps a little deeper, because he who is so, shows a desire to please you beyond the mere general politeness of a gentleman.

Now the first gem of politeness is true humility; the second is, that it should be our ever-recurring thought that it is our bounden duty not to go about hurting, worrying, being rude to or annoying, the people whom we meet, but that we should, even where we personally dislike people, make each one as comfortable, give to each as little trouble, and to all, words as pleasant as we can. These two rules will make men always polite.

It is said that men are growing ruder and rougher in their behavior to women than they used to be. The inferred rudeness of men towards women who are below them in station, or for whose applause or pleasure they are careless, should be marked by those who wish to be truly polite.

A man may be a most charming companion to a woman whom he loves, surround her with luxuries, and defer to her wishes with unswerving kindness; but he is hardly a polite man for all that, if he sneers at some poor ugly old creature, or is habitually rude and selfish in his common intercourse with womankind; and too many men are so.

One cause for the decreasing politeness of men to women, is the fact that woman, misled by Utopians and those visionary persons who love to be talked about, and mouth philanthropy as a puppy mumbles and mouths a bone, has put herself in opposition to man, and is no longer content to be his helpmate, but stands boldly up as his rival.

Let us just look at woman as she now stands in the world's eye. She is no longer the gentle sex; she wishes to cast off her distinctive clothes, to enter the same arena as man. She is content—nay, proud—to read a paper at the Social Science Congress upon Population, suffrage, or to debate the policy of nations.

So many have attempted a definition of politeness, that it is difficult to avoid saying something which has been said before. It is certain that you may be prescriptively polite; that is, you may learn your manners by rule, and yet be a bore.

True politeness comes always from the heart, not from the head. It is not learnt from books, although a man who has it may wish to look at such books to see how he is to please others. It is a sort of minor benevolence, a very great virtue, and in its little acts mounting up to an immense height.

It involves a constant sacrifice—a negation of self, which may be trifling now and then, but which, if acted on for many years, must make a vast sum of sacrifice. It is the cup of water given first to another, when you are yourself thirsty; the seat in a vehicle surrendered to a poor woman, and a ride in the rain for yourself.

It is the constant, noble, open, cheery look to others, when you yourself are distressed; the ready smile, the offered hand to the blind man who is at the crossing; the help given to the lame dog at the stile; the defence of the little boy against his big tyrant; the best cut of the family leg of mutton sent habitually to others—this is politeness. It is quite true that these sacrifices may come to be very easy to us, that a true gentleman does not think of them, that he would be distressed did he ever have to act otherwise.

Benevolence, or at least the assumption of benevolence, lies at the bottom of every code in the world. Finally, real civility differs from prescribed politeness in this—that it extends itself to every one, while the latter applies itself only to our intimates, and to ladies and gentlemen. Nothing can be closer at the commencement of their career, nor nothing farther apart at the end.

A rich woman, who would die in the agonies of wounded pride, were she not fulfilling the prescribed laws of politeness to a visitor whom she detests, and who bores her, will at the same time be so regardless of her workpeople, that poor girls may work themselves into consumptions to please her whims. Such a woman may be polished, but she cannot be truly civilized.

The man who is polite only to his equals and superiors entertains but a vulgar notion of manners. "Let each esteem others better than himself," says St. Paul, the deeper thinker, correct scholar, and high-born gentleman; and in those few words he has put the whole essence of volumes of treatises on true civility.

COME quietly away with me, and we will walk up and down the narrow path, by the sweet-briar hedge; and, as we listen to the low song of the blackbird, the fresh air will cool our aching brows, and we shall find comfort. In these things, fresh air and the bird's song, and the fragrance of the lovely flowers, God has given us a blessing; like sleep, they are His medicines—"balm of sweet minds." We will walk to and fro under the shade of those elms, and we will be calm; bitter recollections shall be made sweet by the thoughts of His mercies; and, in the midst of the sorrows we have in our hearts, His comforts shall refresh our souls, and our minds shall be stored with many thoughts, sweet, like the perfume of these flowers.

THESE things are often unknown to the world: there is much pain that is quite noiseless, and vibrations that make human agonies are often a mere whisper in the roar of hurrying existence. There are glances of hatred that stab and raise no cry of murder; robberies that leave man or woman for ever beggared of peace and joy, yet kept secret by the sufferer—committed to no sound except that of low moans in the night—seen in no writing except that made on the face by the slow months of suppressed anguish and early morning tears. Many an inherited sorrow that has marred a life has been breathed into no human ear.

How often do we try, and persevere in trying, to make a sort of neat show of our good qualities, without anything within to correspond, just like children who plant blossoms without any roots in the ground to make a pretty show for the hour! We find fault in our lives and we cut off the weed, but we do not root it up; we find something wanting in ourselves, and we supply it, not by sowing the divine seed of heavenly principle, but by copying the deeds that the principle ought to produce.

BOTH the mind and body are so constituted that they require constant but varied action. Utter idleness, of either body or mind, unless they be in a more or less diseased state, is not only unnecessary, but harmful in the extreme. It is a habit which, once indulged in, will grow upon the individual. Change of occupation for the muscles, change of the current of thought for the brain, is what will promote the fullest and most healthful development of both.

ALL volunteered fluent apologies have some mixture of a lie in them. No person who plans apologies plans to speak the plain truth. If he is ingenious, he contrives a veneer of fact; but the substance is false—an actuating principle or motive is kept out of sight. Nobody who is fair and above-board in conscience and aims has the apologizing impulse.

WE cannot place too high a value on the art of reading aloud with ease, intelligence, and expression, when we consider how powerfully it tends to strengthen family union, to harmonize various minds, and to supply unfading sources of refreshment and delight, in which the narrow views of self-interest do not intrude.

I HAVE long felt that until the fathers and mothers are better men and women, our schools can accomplish comparatively little. I believe that any improvement that could be brought to bear on the mothers, more especially, would effect a greater amount of good than anything that has yet been done.

THE paths of virtue are plain and straight, so that the blind, or persons of the meanest capacity, cannot err. Dishonesty requires skill to conduct it, and as great art to conceal what it is every one's interest to detest.

NO selfishness is so hideous as the selfishness which prevails among the passionate, who, having enjoyed all the wild delirium of pleasure with each other, heartlessly abandon one another in the hour of extremity.

IT may serve as a comfort to us in all our calamities and afflictions, that he who loses anything and gets wisdom, is a gainer by the loss.

CONFIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENTS.

F. W. H.—The word lough in Ireland, like that of loch in Scotland, is applied equally to salt-water inlets or to inland lakes.

W. D. F.—Quinine is one of the best remedies for neuralgia, but should only be taken under the direction of a medical man.

JASON.—Ordinary express speed would be about forty miles an hour, but some trains are timed to do over sixty miles an hour during part of their journey.

JEM.—The seven colors of the rainbow in order are violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange, and red. They are the colors of the spectrum, and are formed by the decomposition of white light.

SAPPY.—India-rubber and gutta-percha dissolve in mineral naphtha, chloroform, or bisulphide of carbon. To vulcanize, variable proportions of sulphur are used; ebonite is made from half of each.

DICK W R.—At morning and evening parties it is the sole privilege of the lady of the house to ask a guest to sing or play; and when he or she can do so they will, if well bred, at once consent, without any fuss.

O. C. G.—A gentleman in calling on a lady by a standing invitation should not send her word to expect him on any special evening, but should take his chances of finding her at home. If she be out, he must leave his card and call a week or two later.

IVY G.—The meaning of the names "Vashti" is "a beautiful woman"; it is Persian; Vashti was the queen of Ahasuerus, who, for refusing to show herself to the king's guests at a royal banquet when sent for by the king, incurred his wrath, and so was repudiated and discarded; see Esther 1.

E. G. G.—The legal profession is very much overcrowded, especially in the large cities. As a natural consequence the chances are against any young man in moderate circumstances winning a way to competence, unless possessed of a great fund of legal knowledge and acumen, and influential friends to help him along.

H. Q.—To lay differs only by grammatical usage from to lie; we lay down the ruler, an inanimate object, but we tell the dog to lie down. So slight is the difference, that to say the ruler is lying on the desk is not less correct than to say you will find it laying on the desk. The goods may lay in the warehouse, and you may let them lie there.

E. L. C.—Teplitz, North Bohemia, 45 miles north-west of Prague, is a noted watering-place. Of its seventeen alkalo-saline springs, eleven are said to be used chiefly for the gout and rheumatism. It is yearly visited by a great many invalids and tourists. In one season, some years ago, they numbered 30,000. It is also noted for being the place where a treaty of alliance between Russia, Prussia, and Austria, against Napoleon, was concluded Sept. 9, 1813.

F. R. S.—It is customary for the gentleman who is the head of the household, in the ordinary family circle, to sit at the side of table, in the centre, having plates at his right hand, with food near by. When all the family are seated, and all in readiness, he will serve the guests who may be present; he will next serve the eldest lady of the household, then the ladies and gentlemen as they come in order. The hostess will sit opposite her husband, and preside over the tea.

T. W.—The oscillation or vibration of any coin, suspended by a string from the thumb, is caused by the motion of the blood through the veins, i.e., the pulsation of the thumb. The direction of such motion, which like that of a pendulum, is regulated at the discretion of the holder. The rotatory motion is merely that of a body seeking to strike out in its incipient state the direction it afterwards takes, like the tipsy gyrations of a top before and after it begins its "sleep," i.e., its strongest period of spinning.

JUGURTHA.—A biographical or classical dictionary would give you all you want to know. Wolfe's piece is founded on the history of Jugurtha, illegitimate son of Manastabal, king of Numidia. He assisted the Roman general Scipio, bribed the Roman senators, prevailed against the true heir, Adherbal, but was afterwards betrayed into the hands of Sylla, another Roman general, after a war of five years, dragged in triumph after the chariot of Marius, coadjutor of Sylla, and afterwards was thrown into prison to be starved to death. He succumbed to this cruel fate in six days, 106 years before Christ. The soliloquy you have copied out is Wolfe's poetical notion of what he would have said under such circumstances.

R. L. G.—We do not think that the return to the earth of the elements extracted from it for the food and clothing of man will ever be a serious difficulty, or that the feeding of mankind will overtax human ingenuity. The fecundity of the earth is enormous. Man snatches only a handful of food where he might take a load. Human thought has not been turned towards the production of food in the same way as it has busied itself with multiplying manufactures and abolishing distance. It is quite impossible to compare every new invention with similar patents that have embodied the same principle and to determine who was the real originator. Probably nine-tenths of the beginnings of our labor-saving mechanisms cannot be traced. Who, for instance, invented lucifer-matches, or gunpowder, or spectacles? The world generally gives its tribute to those who brought a good thing into common use, rather than to those who first perfected it in secrecy. It is hard, but perhaps unavoidable.

WRECKED.

BY H. H.

Wreck'd, with her living freight of human souls,
Wreck'd in the bosom of the treacherous sea;
Wreck'd, and the blue Atlantic o'er her rolls,
And they who were this morn have ceased to be.

Wreck'd; and no trace of mast, or rope, or spar,
To tell where now the gallant vessel lies;
The sea-bird only mark'd her doom afar,
And o'er the spot, with wondering clamor, cries.

Wreck'd, as full oft in this tempestuous life
Are wreck'd our hopes: Alas that it should be!
Wreck'd, as goes down our vessel in the strife,
And makes no sign this side Eternity!

Almost.

BY B. Y.

A DEAD silence; a blazing fire; two meerschaums in full blast; two enraged masculine faces.

"It's an abominable, confounded shame!" burst out Beresford at last.

Jocelyn also admitted that it was a shame. But the adjectives he employed were terser and more powerful than those of the first speaker.

"The old fellow must have been mad!" continued Beresford kicking a piece of coal vindictively.

Jocelyn admitted this also—that "the old fellow" must have been mad.

Beresford and Jocelyn were chums—they had always been chums. They were also cousins. They occupied jointly a suite of dingy rooms in Bloomsbury. They had each run through a pretty fair fortune, and were, in consequence, at present experiencing the unpleasant sensation of being harder up than they had ever been in their lives before.

Their sole means of subsistence of late had been the occasional contribution of social and political articles to the weekly and monthly magazines. And for this work the remuneration was not royal. Thus they were, I repeat, unpleasantly hard up.

They had obtained temporary loans upon most of their portable belongings, and for the last week had been in the lowest depths of that slough of despond known as "the blues." After to-night (so they had decided) even that last beloved luxury of impecunious man—tobacco—would have to be abandoned. And after that—the Deluge.

The evening's post, however, had brought two letters, and with them a temporary lifting of the clouds. Both envelopes were long and blue, official-looking. Both were directed in a similar round, labored handwriting, suggestive of office boys. Our friends opened them simultaneously and began to read.

Two minutes later Beresford had flung his down on the table, and was shaking his cousin's hand madly and excitedly.

"Great Scott! was there ever such luck?" he almost yelled. "Who could have believed it possible?—just in the nick of time! What are you looking so glum about, Jocelyn? Your letter's the same as mine, isn't it? Doesn't it say that old Uncle Jerry has died in America, and left us each a thousand a year, though he never saw either of us? By Jove! I don't know whether I'm standing on my head or my heels!"

"You'll know presently," observed Jocelyn, dryly. "Have you finished your letter?"

"No, not yet. Had to stop and take breath," chuckled the other.

"Ah, that's right—you'll want it," was the somewhat enigmatical answer.

So Beresford finished his letter. Having done so, he uttered a low whistle of dismay.

For it appeared that these legacies of a thousand a year to each cousin were hampered with certain conditions—which, to be brief, were as follows.

Uncle Jerry, it seemed, had a house situated in an old-fashioned square in Islington. His nephews were to inhabit this house, or forfeit their legacies. Further, Uncle Jerry also possessed a distant relative called Mrs. Ann Pibex, a widow, at present residing in the wilds of Yorkshire.

She, in her turn, possessed a daughter, who rejoiced in the name of Euphemia. Jocelyn and Beresford were to provide for these two lonely females, "making them happy and comfortable," (so ran the will), until they, the Pibexes, should die or commit matrimony. Nay, more, the quartette were to inhabit together the above-mentioned house at Islington. In this case also, if the conditions were not rigidly complied with, the legacies were to be forfeited.

"Cheerful! Eh?" observed Jocelyn, after watching his cousin's countenance for a brief space in silence.

"Islington!" ejaculated the latter. "Two strange women—and one of them a widow! The alternative to forfeit the legacies! Oh, it's inconceivable.

However, of course it ended in their removing to the house at Islington, and awaiting with resignation the advent of their female relatives. A lingering hope sustained them that one, or even both, of the latter might be good-looking. The house, they found, was exquisitely furnished and decorated. If it had been in any other part of London, it would have been a veritable gem. But in this world the gifts of the gods usually come handicapped—considerably.

Behold then, one April night, Jocelyn and Beresford, clad in irreproachable evening-dress, awaiting the arrival of their feminine housemates-to-be, who had written to say (or rather Mrs. Pibex had written to say) they would arrive "about" half-past six. It was now half past seven, and dinner-time.

At long, long, long last, a four wheeler rumbled up to the door. The knocker banged. Ten minutes later the two wretched young men were feebly trying to look as if they were not utterly floored, routed, dismayed, horror-stricken.

For all hope was at an end. Mrs. and Miss Pibex excelled in utter "impossibleness" anything in the female line Jocelyn or Beresford had ever seen. Mrs. Pibex was an elderly woman, dressed like a girl of sixteen. She had a flat, vulgar face, with half-closed snake-like eyes, and a nose of which little was visible save the nostrils.

But Euphemia? No words of mine could adequately describe Euphemia. There was something pathetically preposterous about her. Her dress, her face, her voice, her manner, were all alike outrageously mirth-provoking.

"And these creatures are to be quartered on us for life," thought Jocelyn in numb horror, "for what man in his senses would marry either of them?"

Both men felt absolutely sick with rage and mortification. A thousand a year was indeed a miserable compensation for such companionship. But they were not allowed much time for reflection, for Mrs. Pibex bore down upon her crushed and speechless fellow-heritors with outstretched hands and an oily, half-suppressed smile.

For one awful moment they feared she was going to kiss them. They were spared that last straw however. She did not. Euphemia to each poked out a limp, froggy hand, and volunteered the information that it was "awful cold." Jocelyn and Beresford smiled stiff and ghastly smiles of welcome. Fortunately there was no need for them to say anything, for Mrs. Pibex talked enough for all four.

At last Beresford feebly suggested that the ladies might wish to remove their travelling-gear before dinner, which was now considerably over due. Mrs. Pibex graciously acquiesced, and rustled away with Euphemia to "make themselves pretty," as she archly observed. The two men retired to the smoking-room to await the summons to their long-delayed dinner.

Arrived there, they gazed at each other silently and stupidly for quite a minute. Then Beresford said, in a voice absolutely ludicrous in its despair:

"Jocelyn, did you ever in all your life see two such——" He stopped, words failing him.

Jocelyn was leaning his back against the mantelpiece, glaring moodily at his boots.

"It's simply infernal," he said with a curt quietness much more impressive than any furious protest would have been.

Then he added:

"I tell you, Beresford, there's trouble ahead for both of us. That old woman is dangerous. They're both dangerous. So, look here, we'd better just begin as we mean to go on. Let it be distinctly understood that we keep to one part of the house and they to the other. And for that matter, after to-night we can dine at the club."

"I say," began Beresford hesitatingly, "do you suppose they'll expect us to—er—take them about, and that?"

"I don't know what they'll expect!" was the grimly significant answer.

Just then the second gong sounded, and they repaired to the drawing room, where Mrs. and Miss Pibex—both exceedingly, nay, startlingly decollete—were awaiting them.

With an utterably indescribable expression upon his handsome face, Jocelyn offered his arm to the widow. Beresford followed with the daughter.

Without her hat Euphemia looked even more curious than with it, being possessed of an abnormally high and glazy forehead, from which her fair hair was brushed back tightly, thus leaving it fully exposed to view.

The girl's face was not so much ugly as intensely comic, Beresford decided, as he pensively devoured his soup. Her mouth was continually distended in a wide, vacant smile; her round, staring eyes, almost destitute of eyebrows and lashes, never winked, or even changed their expression. Her nose was a somewhat improved edition of her mother's. Her voice was deep and startling. Happily she did not use it much.

Mrs. Pibex, on the contrary, talked almost incessantly. Her voice was loud and sonorous; and her utterances, and even the formation of her sentences, bore the semblance of monotonous recitative.

"How sweet it is," she said, looking round her with her slow, oily smile, when dinner was half over, "how sweet it is to be all thus assembled under one roof, round one table—the recipients of one common bounty, as one might say! What thanksgivings — what hymns of praise ought to animate our bounding hearts as we retire to rest to-night!"

Certainly it was neither thanksgiving nor hymn of praise which animated Jocelyn's bounding heart at that moment. Aloud, however, he only said, in a clear, expressionless voice:

"May I help you to some more claret, Mrs. Pibex?"

"Thank you"—with a bend of her flower-bedecked head. "One should not despise the luxuries a generous Providence has seen fit to send us. Thank you—I will take it in the tumbler. These glasses are very small."

Beresford was meanwhile driving heavily through a one-sided conversation with Euphemia. Beresford was a good-hearted fellow. His friends, however, were wont to observe that he was "an awful fool." And, as a matter of fact, he was good-natured almost to idiocy.

He could not for the life of him say "no" to anyone; it was possible to persuade him to very nearly anything. Especially weak was he in regard to the fair sex. Just now he was smiling even on Euphemia.

All at once that young lady looked up with some semblance of animation.

"I've never been to a theatre," she said. "I want to go."

"Yes?" hesitated Beresford, quailing inwardly. "I—I'm afraid there isn't anything much worth seeing at any of the theatres just now——"

Here Jocelyn's strong baritone interposed.

"I regret, Miss Pibex, that the—er—literary avocations of Mr. Beresford and myself quite preclude our taking part in any evening entertainments. We are frequently at work from morning till night, and often from night till morning as well."

This was a shameless deviation from the actual truth, of course, but Jocelyn was in no mood to be particular as to a word or two.

"Ah, yes—formerly," said Mrs. Pibex, with a slow, meaning smile that made Jocelyn long to strangle her with his own hands.

"But now, I hope, all will be changed. I know the true kind nature of yourself and Mr. Beresford will prompt you both to do all in your power to accede to the conditions of poor Jeremiah's will. I allude to our being made 'happy and comfortable.' Hap—py and com—fort—able!" she repeated, with a deliberate unctuous infliction that froze Jocelyn's blood.

He had forgotten that abominable clause in the will. Surely this woman would not be such a fiend as to stretch the clause to the utmost?

He did not know Mrs. Ann Pibex.

When a due time had elapsed the ladies withdrew, and the men, left alone, gazed murderously at the two vacant chairs, silently swallowed a glass or two of port, and retired to the smoking-room.

From this retreat they sent up a mendacious message to the drawing-room to the effect that owing to a stress of literary work they would be unable to join Mrs. and Miss Pibex again that evening.

(I am not aware that the game of chess comes under the head of "literary work." But what's in a name?)

For some weeks after this Jocelyn and Beresford adhered to their excellent programme of "beginning as they meant to go on." They shut themselves up in their "study"—alias smoking room—for the greater part of the day; they lunched and dined at their club; and, as a rule, they did not get home until well on in the morning.

I must mention, by the way, that by this time they had had several brisk passages at arms with Mrs. Pibex, whose funeral they would have attended with pleasure—especially Jocelyn.

One night they had been dining with a batch of war-correspondents just home from the Soudan, and I am bound to say that it was nearer 5 than 4 a. m., when a merry little hansom deposited them, in a decidedly jovial frame of mind, at the door of 16, Podlington Square. Having let themselves in, they closed the door, and—found themselves face to face with Mrs. Ann Pibex, in a night cap that would have scared any man living, and a dressing-gown to match.

"Hullo; Mrs. Pibex!" said Beresford, leaning up against the hall-table, and speaking with foolhardy geniality. "You are early afoot this morning!"

While Jocelyn, who had been hanging up his hat and coat, said in unwontedly bland tones:

"To what may we attribute the honor of this interview, madam?"

"Don't madam me, sir," was the uncompromising reply. "I have something to say to you both." And the speaker, with majestic strides, led the way to the dining-room.

Both men mechanically followed her.

"For twenty-three consecutive nights," began Mrs. Pibex, in an awful voice, "for twenty-three consecutive nights have you disturbed the innocent slumbers of my daughter and myself——"

"I can assure you nothing was further from my thoughts," interposed Jocelyn politely.

"For twenty-three consecutive nights—or rather mornings," went on their accuser, in a somewhat louder key, "have you sneaked into this house at an hour when all respectable men should be asleep."

"True—true," assented Jocelyn, who was in a marvellously good humor. "That's the mischief of being engaged in literary pursuits. One never knows when one may get to sleep. Our mission is to send our readers to sleep."

"Have some soda-water, Mrs. Pibex?" said Beresford cheerfully. (He was uncorking a bottle of that wholesome beverage.) "You'll find it awfully cooling."

"Pray sit down, Mrs. Pibex," added Jocelyn, bringing her a chair.

"As the head of the family assembled under this roof," went on the old lady, ignoring both these friendly offers, "I feel it my duty to speak. And I will. After to-night I shall insist on your being in the house by half-past ten at the very latest. I shall insist on your taking your meals in the house. And I shall insist on my daughter and myself being treated as friends and companions, and not as pariahs and outcasts."

"What the deuce do you mean, madam?" exclaimed Jocelyn, losing his temper suddenly, and forgetting his manners. "Do you suppose we shall submit to such unwarrantable insolence? Do you suppose our actions are to be dictated, and our freedom interfered with by you?

"You must be mad, madam—mad! Why your very appearance here to-night, in that most—most outrageous get up, is a transgression of every law of etiquette and propriety. Go back to your room, Mrs. Pibex, I beg of you, lest I should forget that consideration due to your sex, and say what I might possibly regret later."

Mrs. Pibex's night-cap quivered with indignation. She glared first at Jocelyn and then at Beresford. The latter was in an agonized fit of laughter.

"You have both been drinking!" she said with deliberate and incisive scorn.

[[Now there was just the necessary grain of truth in this statement to make the so-accused young men furious. Beresford stopped laughing and rose to his feet. Jocelyn turned white with rage. But before either had time to speak, Mrs. Pibex, with that kaleidoscopic change of mood so characteristic of her sex, astounded them by going into a violent fit of hysterics.

For a moment or two both men stood appalled. Then, muttering profane and impious things, they rushed from the room and upstairs, and locked themselves into their bedrooms.

Next morning the combatants met at breakfast; the young men sullen and preoccupied—Mrs. Pibex blandly ingratiating. So ingratiating was she indeed, that

Beresford was soon completely mollified. But not so Jocelyn. He bade her and her daughter a curt "good-morning," then disposed of his breakfast with marvellous rapidity and disappeared. He did not come home to dinner—and found reason to regret it.

I don't think I have mentioned that Jocelyn at this time was severely enamored of a very pretty girl—a Miss Fanny Harford—who had given him to understand that she was not altogether indifferent to him. Like the immortal Miss Squeers, they were "not exactly engaged, but going to be." The rock ahead was the young lady's mother, who had other views for her daughter, and was, as yet, unaware of Jocelyn's pretensions.

To-day (it was a Saturday) he had received a tiny note from his divinity, hinting that it was possible she and her mother might be at "Prayer-book Parade," on the following forenoon. If he had nothing better to do—the writer went on to say—Mamma would be pleased if he would go back to lunch with them. Of course Jocelyn immediately wrote a note saying he should certainly be there—and a good deal more besides.

The lovers had had a pretty stiff quarrel on the subject of the Pibexes—Miss Harford affirming that she never would consent to live in the same house as these ladies, whom she had seen once in the distance and declined to be introduced to. In vain had Jocelyn distractedly explained the terms of "Uncle Jerry's" will, explained that if he parted company with the Pibexes he was financially lost. Miss Harford was obdurate.

Some officious female friend had assured her that she knew for a fact that Jocelyn had been seen paying marked attention to Mrs. Pibex, and that the widow was possessed with enormous wealth, which was to be doubled if she married Jocelyn, etc., etc.

All this, of course, was both absurd and untrue. But I am sorry to say Miss Harford had made some very disagreeable remarks on the matter, thus causing Jocelyn to hate his elderly house mate with a more deadly hatred than before, if that were possible. Besides, the fair Fanny gravely assured him, much as she cared for him, she could not live at Islington.

Late on Saturday night, as these two persecuted young men were in their smoking room—one of the few retreats sacred from the Pibexes—Beresford said in a suspiciously casual way:

"Oh, by-the-bye, Jocelyn, it seems that Miss Pibex and her mother have a great desire to go to the Park some Sunday forenoon. So at dinner to-night the old lady suggested that we might go to-morrow. And I—well, I could hardly get out of it, could I? I—er—said I would mention it to you, you know. I suppose you'll go. Eh?"

Whereupon Jocelyn, whose temper was hot and strong, fell into a violent passion, and used language of a nature too ungoverned to be transcribed.

"Well—I couldn't help it you know," put in Beresford, lighting a cigar, and speaking in a deprecatory sort of way.

"Couldn't help it!" stormed Jocelyn. "By Jove! Anyone would think you were a born fool! Do you suppose I'm going to show myself in the Park with that old hag and her caricature of a daughter? Upon my word, Beresford, you have no more spirit than a—a mouse! I believe if a woman you detested insisted on marrying you, you wouldn't know how to say 'no' to her!"

Beresford murmured something ruefully unintelligible. Sometimes he feared the latter contingency himself.

"You can exhibit yourself with them if you like," continued Jocelyn, kicking an unoffending foot-stool to the other end of the room, "but I shall not. I wouldn't be seen with either of them, much less both, for £500 a time!"

"Oh, I say!" remonstrated Beresford, looking very blank, "you don't mean to say you're going to let me in for escorting both of them?"

"You've let yourself in," said the other shortly. "So you can let yourself out again."

He was really in a very bad temper to-night; for—will it be believed?—he had, in some accountable way, forgotten to post his letter to Miss Harford. Of course he could explain when he saw her to-morrow. But still, he was inexpressibly annoyed.

On the following morning Jocelyn, it appeared, was incapacitated by a severe cold from gracing the family breakfast-table. When the meal was over, Beresford went up to his cousin's room. He found that individual lying in bed luxuriously reading a recent shilling shocker, a cigarette between his lips, and the wreck of a first-class breakfast on a tray by the bedside.

"I say, Jocelyn, it's a deuced shabby trick of you," said the wretched Beresford, who was in church-going array. "Do you mean to say you're actually going to have the cheek to lie there and let me trot out these two frights, first to church, and then to the Row—alone?"

"Oh, get out!" was all the satisfaction he received.

"You've no idea how they've got themselves up," resumed the other mournfully. "I wish you saw them. People 'll think I'm a travelling showman. Even one wouldnt have been so bad. But two! No man could go through it and live."

Jocelyn turned over a leaf, and settled himself down among his pillows.

"Are you coming, Mr. Beresford?" cried a well-known voice from downstairs.

"I'll pay you out for this, Jocelyn, see if I don't," muttered poor Beresford sullenly, as he left the room.

But Jocelyn never stirred.

An hour or two later he got up, dressed, ordered a hansom, and directed the man to drive to Hyde Park. Arrived there, for some time he sauntered along among the chairs and pedestrians, greeting various acquaintances on his way. But Fanny Harford's pretty, piquante face was nowhere to be seen. For the time he had almost forgotten the existence of the Pibexes.

Suddenly he was conscious of a cold chill, as it were, running up his spine. Who were these horribly familiar figures, bearing steadily down upon him? Was Beresford mad? Why on earth hadn't he had the sense to take them to some more secluded part, instead of here?

"Good Heavens!" Jocelyn ejaculated under his breath, "what awful—what unspeakable guys!"

And so they were. Every eye in the Row was turned upon them in unveiled amazement. And Beresford—poor, good-natured, soft-hearted Beresford! No man could have looked more unhappy.

He was white and crimson by turns, his lips rigidly compressed under his fair moustache, his eyes as angry as such soft blue eyes could be. For, in spite of his agonized entreaties to the contrary, these two unconscionable women had each taken possession of one of his arms, and hung thereon languishingly.

On they came; Beresford looking straight before him, cutting all his acquaintances dead, male and female; Euphemia, with her ridiculous face, her open mouth, her unwinking eyes, her costume and coiffure of three years ago; Mrs. Pibex, smiling, wriggling, bridling, dressed in royal blue silk, profusely picked out with scarlet, her long grey curls waving in the strong May wind. (Just now one had flown right across Beresford's face.) A more curious contrast than the outrageousness of the women's get-up and general appearance, and the irreproachable elegance of the man's, could hardly be conceived.

Jocelyn felt sick. No, he could not stand it. He deliberately turned and fled.

But—once more—he did not know Mrs. Ann Pibex. He heard quick footsteps behind him, and the next moment Mrs. Pibex's claw-like fingers grasped his arm.

"So glad you are better, dear Mr. Jocelyn," she exclaimed breathlessly, looking up into his face with a languishing smile. "But ought you to be out in this cold wind? Ah, no! I think you and I will go home now, eh?"

Jocelyn was silent, simply because he felt that if he spoke at all he should say something absolutely brutal. Mrs. Pibex hung more heavily upon his arm. And just then—oh, malignant fate!—he became aware that Miss Harford and her mother were alighting from their carriage a yard or two ahead of him, and that they were regarding his companion and himself with somewhat haughty amazement.

After a supercilliously sweeping glance at Mrs. Pibex they bowed briefly and coldly to the maddened Jocelyn, and passed on. The young man felt as if someone had struck him a sudden blow. His face grew deathly white.

Almost choking with passion he tore his loathed companion along the Row at a pace hitherto unknown in that fashionable resort, tore her through the gate and into Piccadilly. When she recovered her breath and her scattered senses she was being driven rapidly Islington-wards in a hansom—alone. Jocelyn had disappeared.

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It was two days later. Dinner had come to an end some time ago in the old-fashioned house in Podlington Square. Euphemia, dressed with her usual taste, in a flaring tartan silk, was strumming the old song "Sweethearts" on the piano.

Mrs. Pibex was arrayed in a ruby colored gown of velveteen. She had discarded her cap to-night, and her hair was curled to a fearful and wonderful tightness. A plentiful supply of powder adorned her usually glazy features, and her lips were curved in a satisfied smile. Of late, her dress had been steadily assuming a more and more juvenile air.

"It wouldn't surprise me at all if she appears in short frocks and pinafores one of these days," remarked Beresford, with gloomy mirth, that night in the seclusion of the smoking room. "I believe she's setting her cap at you, Jocelyn."

But Jocelyn was in no mood for even the gloomiest of jokes. He had called twice upon the Harfords since that wretched Sunday, only to be told that they were "not at home." He had written to Miss Harford, imploring her to grant him an interview, only to receive the stiffest notes in reply, regretting that her engagements were so numerous as to render the said interview altogether impossible. The unhappy young man was therefore in a state of mind bordering on frenzy. Even Mrs. Pibex had been almost cowed by his savage looks and manner. Almost—not quite.

When Beresford had finished his third cigar, a timid knock was heard at the door, and a moment later the fair Euphemia entered.

"Mamma wants to know if you are not coming upstairs to have some music," she said in her deep voice.

"I'm not coming. I'm busy," said Jocelyn curtly and rudely.

He was lying back in his chair, staring at his shoes, his hands were in his trouser pockets, and an unlit cigar was between his lips.

"Are you coming, Mr. Beresford?" went on the girl stolidly.

Now it happened that as he dejectedly followed Euphemia upstairs, the girl slipped and would have fallen, had not Beresford involuntarily put out his arm to save her. She screamed shrilly, and, with a wild clutch at his neck, let her head fall flat on his shoulder. Just then the drawing room door opened, and Mrs. Pibex appeared, every curl fluttering in maternal agitation.

Beresford tried to draw away his arm, but Euphemia only clung tighter. One of the housemaids came upstairs and passed them. Beresford saw that her face was crimson with suppressed laughter. A cold perspiration broke out all over the unhappy young man.

"Mr. Beresford! Euphemia! Do my eyes deceive me?" exclaimed Mrs. Pibex in her monotonous recitative.

Beresford was paralyzed and speechless. Euphemia did not stir.

"Is it possible"—went on Mrs. Pibex in an awful tone—"that I find you trifling with the affections of my innocent child?"

"No—upon my word!" burst out the wretched Beresford in a voice that might have drawn tears from a stone.

Mrs. Pibex smiled slowly.

"I see I have misjudged you," with a gracious bend of her bedecked head. "Doubtless you were, even now, on your way to ask a mother's consent and blessing. Follow me, I beg."

Euphemia raised herself with alacrity, and Beresford, cold with horror and bewilderment, mechanically entered the drawing room.

"My dear boy—my dear girl——" she began, when she had closed the door.

"Mrs. Pibex!" exclaimed Beresford indignantly. "I can assure you——"

But she interrupted him by laying one hand on his shoulder, and the other on his lips.

"My dear boy," she said again, very solemnly this time, "or I may almost say, my dear son—you already have a mother's consent and blessing. I know that you have won my child's heart. She is a girl in a thousand—though I say it who perhaps should not." Here Mrs. Pibex wept.

"But, madam," burst forth Beresford, furiously, "you are laboring under some extraordinary mistake. I—I have no desire to—to win Miss Pibex's affections. I——"

"You have no desire to win her affections?" echoed the widow, with ominously glittering eyes. "Then may I ask, sir, what your arm was doing round her waist?"

"I can assure you that was the merest accident!" returned the young man hotly. "Miss Pibex—you can surely support me, in this?" he added, turning with imploring fierceness to his proposed fiancee.

But that young lady only wriggled uneasily; then, to his inexpressible dismay and fury, burst into tears, and hid her face on his unwilling breast.

"I thought it was because you liked me!" she sobbed. "It was only the other day you said you'd never seen a girl like me before."

Beresford groaned. It was quite true; he had said so—said it with a grim sense of humor, and unthinking of consequences.

Mrs. Pibex seemed to grow at least an inch taller.

"Look at that weeping child!" she said, with heaving bosom, and eyes that sent Beresford's heart into his very shoes. "Her heart is breaking. Can you look upon your work, and have no pity? Is this what you call carrying out the conditions of your uncle's will? Is this making us 'happy and comfortable?' Listen to me, Anthony Beresford, either you go out of this room my daughter's affianced husband, or to-morrow I explain your infamous conduct to Mr. Cadby, the solicitor. He is my brother in-law, and a most able and Christian man, who will not see the widow and the fatherless deceived and put upon."

"But I tell you," almost shouted Beresford, "I have never asked your daughter to marry me. I have no desire to marry anyone—much less her! I——"

"You have been seen by the household, holding my daughter in your arms," interrupted Mrs. Pibex calmly. "My child's character shall not be compromised. You shall marry her—or take the consequences!"

"I'll see both you and her hanged first!" exclaimed Beresford violently. And flinging Euphemia unceremoniously from him, he rushed from the room.

When Jocelyn was put in possession of the circumstances, he smiled grimly. (Other people's misfortunes are so amusing.)

"You'll find yourself married some fine morning, before you know where you are, if you don't look out," he observed. "That old fiend 'll stick at nothing—and the girl's completely under her thumb. And you're such a fool. It's a confoundedly awkward clause in the will, mind you—that about making them 'happy and comfortable.' Deuce take them and you too," he added savagely. "Between the lot of you, you've put a stopper on my happiness and comfort for a considerable time to come."

"How?" said the other, pausing in his furious promenade up and down the room.

"How?" echoed Jocelyn. "Never you mind how. I'm not up to talking about it yet."

"Pooh! the Harford business," said Beresford contemptuously. "You can easily explain it to them. As for me—I think I'll put a bullet through my head."

"Faith! I wouldn't mind joining you," said Jocelyn, with a queer laugh.

Some days passed. Mrs. Pibex persisted in treating the luckless Beresford as her future son-in-law. On his birthday she presented him with a pair of embroidered slippers, and kissed him. It was only by the most incessant watchfulness that he prevented her repeating the latter ceremony morning and evening.

She called him by his christian name. She left Euphemia alone with him on every possible occasion. Gradually, too, all kinds of parcels began to pour in, from milliners, dressmakers, linendrapers, bootmakers. Beresford seemed to meet them whenever he went out or came in. Then it dawned upon him that Euphemia was buying her trousseau.

People began to congratulate him. A horrible, benumbed, nightmarish conviction filled his soul that some fine morning, as Jocelyn had said, these women would manage to marry him in spite of himself. He could neither eat nor sleep. He could not rest. He grew pale and thin.

One day he noticed in a dull kind of way that Euphemia was wearing his signet-ring. It had slipped off his finger on the previous evening, and he had looked for it in vain. He asked her to give it back to him.

"Why—you gave it to me!" said the girl, gazing at him with her round unwinking eyes.

Without a word Beresford turned and left the room.

"I'm going mad," he said, with a break in his voice as he went slowly downstairs. "There's enough of it now. I'll go out and buy a pistol!"

But first he turned into the smoking-room. Jocelyn was sitting at the table, his head resting on his outstretched arms.

On the floor lay an empty envelope and a sealed letter. The letter was his own letter to Miss Harford—written two days—returned unopened. So Jocelyn was feeling rather bad.

A loud knock at the front door made him lift his head suddenly; and for the first time he became aware of Beresford's presence.

"What do you want? This?" he said recklessly. And as he spoke he held out a small revolver. "All right, Beresford, my boy—you can have the first shot, and I'll have the second. Let's write some letters first, though," he added, with a mad, harsh laugh. "You can say you've blown your brains out because you're going to be married. And I can say I've blown out mine because—ha, ha—because I'm—not!" And he laughed again, long and wildly.

But just then the door opened, and two men entered the room—one tall, thin, and solemn-looking, the other short, stout, and smiling. The latter looked doubtfully from Jocelyn to Beresford, and back again to Jocelyn.

"Mr. Jocelyn and Mr. Beresford, I presume?" he said.

"Yes," answered Jocelyn, curtly enough. "What is your business business?"

"My name is Bang," returned the new comer cheerfully, "of the firm of Bang and Scrubb, solicitors. This gentleman," indicating his companion "is Mr. Jeremiah Murray Gibson—the nephew and godson of that Mr. Jeremiah Gibson who died in America recently. You may—or—remember the conditions of the will," (here Beresford groaned)—"which were that the late Mr. Gibson's money was to be left between you and Mr. Jocelyn and the Pibexes, under the conditions mentioned, provided Jeremiah Murray Gibson were dead——"

"Yes, yes—we know all that," put in Jocelyn impatiently.

"Yes," went on the lawyer gravely. "But, as a matter of fact, he is not dead—though for the last year such has been supposed to the case. This gentleman"—again indicating his companion—"has proved himself beyond all dispute to be Mr. Jeremiah Murray Gibson. Therefore, in the natural course of events, the two thousand a year and—er—this house, revert to him. You are aware, of course, that in view of this contingency, you, Mr. Jocelyn, and you, Mr. Beresford, each received a legacy of $2,500."

There was a dead silence for perhaps one minute. Then Beresford said in a serious voice:

"One moment, Mr. Bang. I think I am right in supposing that the same conditions are attached to Mr. Murray Gibson's legacy as—er—when it belonged to Mr. Jocelyn and myself?"

Mr. Bang looked puzzled.

"I mean," continued Beresford, whose spirits were rising every moment, "that Mrs. and Miss Pibex will—er—share Mr. Pibex's home—as they have shared ours?"

"Oh, certainly—certainly," acquiesced the lawyer. "Such are the terms of the will."

"Ah, thank you—thank you very much indeed," was the unaccountable answer.

* * * * * *

Late that night, long after the Pibexes had gone to bed, a hansom stopped at the corner of Podlington Square, a door in the square opened softly, and two young men stepped out, each carrying a large portmanteau. The portmanteaus were speedily hoisted on to the top of the vehicle, the young men got in, and were driven rapidly away.

Beresford swore afterwards that he saw Mrs. Pibex, in night cap and dressing gown, gesticulating wildly upon the doorstep.

At the end of the following week two young men booked their passage in the steamship Phœnix for America. Their names were respectively Philip Jocelyn and Anthony Beresford. A month later the society papers chronicled the marriage of Miss Fanny Harford to the Honorable George Macgander.

But what became of the Pibexes I may perhaps tell you in another story.

PRISON SECRETS.

In the great gray stone structure called Sing Sing there are always from 1,600 to 2,000 convicts, men who have committed every known crime. These are the pick of the criminal population of New York State.

One-half of them are the product of New York city. There are novices among them, but the atmosphere there is so heavily charged with the knowledge of experienced crime, that before they leave, the novices know nearly all the tricks of the craft.

Silence is supposed to reign supreme in Sing Sing. A convict is forbidden to converse with another. If his lips move he is at once pounced upon by the watchful guard and placed in solitary confinement.

It may jeopardize his "good conduct" record and force him to serve many months, or perhaps years, of confinement, which he might escape. For this simple reason few convicts are detected in the act of talking or conveying information in any way.

Yet they do talk, and talk, often, too. But how they do it is a mystery which the officials of every large prison the world over would like to solve. In Paris and in London, where the discipline, perhaps, is even stricter than in Sing Sing, the convicts have a system of exchanging information. Keepers who have been among convicts many years have endeavored to discover the trick, but without result.

If there were a Presidential election today every convict in Sing Sing would know who was elected the first thing tomorrow morning, and just how the different States stood. Every important news event which happens the world over they know about, yet to read a newspaper or to be caught with one is a serious offense.

When a noted prisoner arrives, like a murderer doomed to the death chair, every convict knows all about it before the clerk has finished taking his pedigree. Yet the convicts are separated in a dozen large buildings. News travels incredibly fast there and so silently that the vigilance of the keepers count for naught. It seems to soak in through the stone walls and make its presence felt, only to the unfortunates.

Every convict knows the criminal history of the others. He knows all the "bad men," the men who would not hesitate a second to commit murder, if provoked, even within the stone walls of the prison. Yet there is no talking. And there is no talking with the fingers. When a convict is walking across the prison yard he keeps his arms folded on his breast. When he is idle in the work shop for a minute or two he keeps his arms folded. It is not due to lack of vigilance that the men are able to communicate with each other. The silent system is enforced as carefully as it is possible to enforce it in an institution where the prisoners are not kept in solitary confinement.

When the men are in the workshops or in the yards they are constantly under the eyes of the guards. They march to and from their work in the lock step, each squad looking like a dirty gray caterpillar as it swings across the yard and each man in that squad facing the same way.

There is not an instant when the men are unwatched, and it is difficult to explain how they communicate. Of course, some of the tricks have been discovered, but these are only resorted to when particular convicts wish to converse.

The fake fight is a common trick. Two convicts without a word of warning will spring at each other like enraged tigers and clutching one another around the neck will roll over the ground in a perfect frenzy of rage.

Blows and kicks will be dealt with terrific force, but all the three valuable words will be exchanged. Genuine fights of this kind are of common occurrence, and so faithfully are the fake fights carried out that it is difficult to distinguish the false from the real.

Criminals who were bitter enemies in the outside world often meet for the first time within the confines of Sing Sing, and when they come together a fierce, if short, fight is bound to come off. That accounts for the number of genuine fights.

Criminal lawyers, who perhaps know as much about convicts as, if not more than, the prison officials themselves, say that they do have a number of well recognized codes of communication. One of the best known methods of this kind consists of a series of raps corresponding to the Morse telegraphic code.

If a prisoner understands telegraphy, he may transmit messages to another prisoner who is also a telegrapher by rapping out the Morse code in his cell, or in the workshop or mess room, without very much fear of detection. Of course, the success of this plan depends upon both men knowing the Morse code; but a knowledge of telegraphy is so common nowadays and so very useful to the experienced crook, that many of them do know it.

In some of the carelessly constructed prisons it has been discovered that the convicts have used the water pipes to construct a series of speaking tubes, and in several cases they have successfully planned escapes in this way.

The system by which prisoners communicate with friends on the outside is also a mystery which prison officials would be glad to fathom. In prison parlance it is known as the "underground."

The convicts are allowed to write home once a month, but each letter is first read by the prison chaplain. If there is anything improper in it, the letter is withheld. But the improper letters never go out by the way of the chaplain. The "underground [illegible]

Criminals in Sing Sing have been known to conduct a series of successful crimes by communicating with accomplices on the outside. Bribing the under keepers would be one way, but the system is too general to be worked in that fashion. Escapes are always planned and carried out through the underground method.

What has been generally accepted as a most extraordinary instance of this sort occurred in 1893, when Pallister and Roehl made their escape from the death house, where the guard is most strict. These two condemned men had received no special favors from the prison management. They were constantly under observation, and they were in that part of the prison where the watch is most strict. They were carefully searched, and, so far as the guards knew, they held no communication with any but those permitted by the prison regulations.

One stormy night they made their escape, and it was sensational, and, so far as the prison authorities went, it was a success. Two bodies were found in the Hudson River some days later, and they were identified as the bodies of Pallister and Roehl.

In the opinion of men who knew something about the prison their escape was the result of a prearranged plan, and it included not only the two most conspicuous actors in it, but their friends outside the prison.

All the circumstances pointed to outside aid, and, in order that such assistance might be effective, Pallister and Roehl must have communicated their plans to the men who assisted them.

No clew has ever been discovered as to how this was done. This is only one instance of many where underground letters have done their work. This faculty of communication is of the most value to the convict and the greatest worry to the guards in planning escapes.

THE WATCHMAN.—The directors of a new bank which had been established in a town in Indiana had engaged the service of a watchman who came well recommended, but did not seem over-experienced.

The president therefore sent for him to post him up a bit, and began—"James, this is your first job of this kind, isn't it?"

"Yes, sir."

"Your duty must be to exercise vigilance."

"Yes, sir."

"Be careful how strangers approach you."

"I will sir.

"No strangers must be allowed to enter the bank at night under any pretext whatever."

"No, sir."

"And our cashier—he is a good man, honest, reliable, and trustworthy; but it will be your duty to keep your eye on him."

"But it will be hard to watch two men and the bank at the same time sir."

"Two men—how?"

"Why, sir, it was only yesterday that the cashier called me in for a talk, and he said you were the squarest man in Indiana, but it would be just as well to keep both eyes on you, and let the directors know if you hung around after hours."

THE GROWTH OF MAN.—Observations regarding the growth of man have determined the following interesting facts. The most rapid growth takes place immediately after birth, the growth of an infant during the first year of its existence being about eight inches. The ratio of increase gradually decreases until the age of three years is reached at which time the size attained is half that which it is to become when full grown. After five years the succeeding increase is very regular till the sixteenth year, being at the rate, for the average man, of two inches a year. Beyond sixteen the growth is feeble, being for the following two years about sixteenths of an inch a year; while from eighteen to twenty the increase in height is seldom over one inch. At the age of twenty five the growth ceases, save in a few exceptional cases.

At Home and Abroad.

Some residents of Brandon, Vermont, were swindled in a horse trade, recently, to the extent of $2,300. Similar swindles were, it is said, perpetrated in several New England towns. A French coach stallion of reputed finest blood was bought by a stock company for $3,500. The horse was sold last week for $115. The swindlers were exceptionally clever, and backed up their fraud in a way that deceived some pretty smart Yankees.

Princess Helena, daughter of Queen Victoria and wife of Prince Christian of Schleswig Holstein, has been so shocked at the bad manners and the ignorance displayed by the wives of Foreign Ministers, of newly created peers and baronets and of civic dignitaries attending a drawing room or "command" to Windsor for the first time that she has undertaken to write a book on etiquette for women in good society, and, in particular, "for ladies who attend royal and imperial courts."

Careful estimates of the force of a cyclone, and the energy required to keep a full-fledged hurricane in active operation, reveal the presence of a power that makes the mightiest efforts of man appear as nothing in comparison. A force fully equal to four hundred and seventy three million horse power was estimated as developed in a West Indian cyclone. This is about fifteen times the power that is creatable by all the means within the range of man's capabilities during the same time. Were steam, water, windmills, and the strength of all men and all animals combined, they could not at all approach the tremendous force exerted by this terrible storm.

With the ascent of the Emperor Nicholas to the throne, Europe presents a spectacle of youthful rulers without a parallel in history. The "White Czar" of All the Russias is only in his twenty-seventh year, whilst his "great grand uncle," the Kaiser, has only entered his thirty-sixth year. In Holland we have a youthful Queen of fifteen, and in Spain a boy King born in the purple. The King of Servia, too, is under twenty-one; and Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria of the same age as the Kaiser. Again, we have in Austria the heir to the throne (his father having renounced his claims) Archduke Franz, thirty two, and unmarried.

James Payne, in the Independent, says that at Otford, in Kent, there was formerly a palace of the Archbishops of Canterbury in which Wolsey is said to have held his court. "It was but a small place and is now a farm-house, picturesque enough, but exhibiting no special signs of prosperity. The other day, however, this little incident happened: The farmer sent for a carpenter to do some odd jobs about the house, and among other things to mend the knocker. The man took it off and said, after a close examination of it: 'Do you know what this knocker is made of?' 'Why, brass, I suppose.' 'No, it is pure gold.' And it was. Think of the years that that rich prize has hung at the mercy of every tramp!"

There is an interesting story told of the Queen's wardrobe. In the earlier portion of her reign Her Majesty was no end for her love of pinks, blues, and magentas, gorgeously-colored brocades and vivid Scotch tartans. One evening the Queen and the Prince Consort, on one of their frequent unattended walks in the lower quarters of Windsor, saw a brilliant blue ball-dress, trimmed with battered roses, and a tartan-gown, trimmed with green velvet, hanging outside a second hand clothes shop, a large ticket informing the world in general that they had once graced the wardrobe of Queen Victoria. Naturally the Queen was very angry and a [illegible] wardrobe maids, to whom the [illegible] cast off gowns fell as perquisites, that they should never again be sold in Windsor or anywhere else, as having been worn by Her Majesty. The regulation holds good to this day.

Deafness Cannot be Cured

[illegible] you have a rumbl[illegible] feet hearing, and when [illegible] deafness is the result, and unless [illegible] taken out and [illegible] condition, hear[illegible]

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Our Young Folks.

THAT MADCAP MABEL.

BY M. G.

ON THE smooth stretch of sand in front of the Queen's Hotel the darky minstrels were strutting about and singing "Push dem Clouds Away," to the accompaniment of a harp and violin. This spot was their invariable pitch, for it was enclosed on two sides by a low stone wall, and more sheltered from the wind than any other part of the beach.

The minstrels had a large audience this morning, for it was the height of the season, and the little watering place was thronged with visitors. The low wall was crowded with children of all sizes, who sat with their spades in their hands, their feet dangling; while below, on mounds of sand, sat mothers and nurses, with books or sewing to occupy them. All were idle just at present, however, for it was impossible to help watching the minstrels and laughing at their queer antics.

"I hope it will be Ettie's turn next," whispered a girl of eleven to her companion, as the song came to an end.

"What a fuss you make about that child, Mabel," was the rather scornful reply. "She isn't at all clever, and mother says she sings in a very common style."

"I like her," said Mabel Dynevor decidedly. "There she comes. How nice she looks!"

The object of Mabel's admiration was a little girl of about ten, the daughter of the leader of the troupe. She wore a boy's suit of crimson plush, and a straw hat with a crimson ribbon. Her fair hair was cut short, which added to her boyish appearance; but she had a pretty face, and was not blacked as the others were. The children greeted her with tumultuous applause, and listened to her song with much interest.

"Now it's going to be the collection," said Mabel, when little Miss Ettie had retired. She fished in the pocket of her loose serge frock and brought forth a penny.

"I saved it from yesterday," she explained. "I wanted to buy toffee dreadfully, but I don't give anything yesterday morning, so I thought I must keep this. Aren't you going to give a penny, Nora? Oh, do! I know you have plenty."

But Nora shook her golden head, and when the box was passed round pretended not to see it.

"You are mean," said Mabel, in a tone of disgust. Nora was her cousin, or she might have been less candid.

"Perhaps you think so," returned the other, in her prim, scornful little way; "but I don't see why I should waste my my money on those minstrels. I'm not as fond of them as you are."

"They are not too vulgar for you to watch them, anyway," retorted Mabel, as she jumped down from the wall and went off alone. Her cheeks were flushed, her dark eyes bright with indignation. She felt that she could not endure Nora's company just then.

Somehow the cousins never could get on together. If they were friends one minute, the next they were at daggers drawn. Nora's mother openly said that Mabel must be to blame, for she was a wild, high-spirited madcap of a girl, while Nora was a model little maiden.

It was dinner time before the cousins met again. The two families had apartments in the Royal Hotel, and shared a large dining-room, the children taking their dinner at their parents' luncheon hour.

Nora was seated beside her mother, looking neat and demure in her blue linen overall, when Mabel burst into the room, her sailor cap hanging round her neck by the elastic, her hair wild, bits of damp green weed clinging to her garments. Her aunt surveyed her with a cold stare of disapproval.

"Am I late, mother?" asked Mabel, breathlessly.

"A little, dear. Pray go to Collins and be made tidy."

Mabel dashed out of the room as abruptly as she had entered it.

Mrs. Pell glanced at her sister-in-law, but Mrs. Dynevor went on quietly carving a chicken.

"Mabel's been paddling," said Nora's meek voice. "I saw her by the Battery with some dirty little children, and they were sending a dog into the water."

"I thought she went out with you, dear," said her mother.

"She wouldn't stay with me," answered Miss Nora.

Mabel returned just then and began to eat her dinner. She had forgotten her cousin's offence, and chatted with her gaily enough.

"Papa will be here this afternoon, Nora," said Mrs. Pell, as they rose from the table, "and he is bringing grandpapa with him."

"Oh, I'm so glad!" cried Mabel, clapping her hands. Old Mr. Pell was her grandfather also, for Nora's father and Mrs. Dynevor were brother and sister.

"May I wear my white silk frock?" asked Nora eagerly.

"Well, yes, if you will be careful of it, dear."

"I'm always careful"—tossing her fair head.

"Mother, I want to look nice when grandpapa comes," pleaded Mabel.

"But you are so careless, girlie. If I allow you to wear your silk, I am afraid you would spoil it."

"No, mother, I wouldn't. I'd be ever so careful."

So, on the strength of this promise, Mabel was arrayed in ivory silk, with a big, crinkly hat to match her frock. She looked very pretty, and her mother could not resist kissing the smiling face that peeped out like a rose from beneath the curled-up brim of the hat.

"Now stay with nurse and the little ones, or go for a quiet little walk, dear," she said, "and come back in an hour, then we can go to the station to meet grandpapa."

So Mabel sallied forth alone, and walked demurely along the Parade, casting longing glances now and then at the groups of children building castles on the sands.

She was determined not to join them, but when she reached the end of the Parade she thought she might continue her walk along the beach for a short distance.

It was much pleasanter to walk on the sand than on the hard, smooth pavement, she thought, and the beach was almost deserted at this end, so that no busy band of workers could tempt her to join them.

She went on for quite a long way, and then she remembered that mother would probably have finished her letters by this time, and would be ready to go to the station by the time she could reach home.

She was about to turn back when she heard a cry, and noticed a group of boys standing near the water's edge, surrounding something that she could not see.

Forgetting her dainty brown shoes, Mabel hurried across the strip of wet sand that separated her from the group. When she drew near she could see a little girl standing in the midst, crying as if in great distress.

"Give him to me," she was saying, through her sobs. "He didn't mean any harm. Oh, my dear little Wag!"

"He bit me—little beast! I'll drown him," said one of the boys. He was a big, coarse-looking fellow, and he held in his arms a tiny, shivering dog.

"It was because you hit him with a stick. Oh! don't put him in the water. He doesn't like it," sobbed the child, as the lad held the tiny creature by the neck and dipped him into the sea, laughing at his piteous whines.

"We'll see about that. Give us a stone, Jake."

"You must not drown the dog," said an imperious voice. The lads turned in astonishment and beheld Mabel standing there, a determined expression on her face.

"Who's to stop us?" said one rudely.

"I will. I know you all. You are donkey boys. I will get my father to have you punished if you hurt the poor dog."

"We're not hurting him," said his captor sullenly, and he again dipped the animal into the water. Mabel darted forward and pulled the dripping little object from his hands, holding it tightly against her breast.

The lad tried to take it from her, and in the scuffle Mabel's hat was knocked off and trodden under foot. Perhaps the lads were a bit frightened at what they had done, or Mabel's threat had made them uneasy, but they ceased their persecutions and walked off. Then the other child came timidly forward.

"Oh, miss, thank you. But they've spoiled your beautiful things."

"Why, you're the darkey's little girl!" cried Mabel, glancing at the tearful face in surprise.

"Yes; I'm Ettie King. Please let me take Wag. His wet, sandy paws are spoiling your frock. They'd have drowned him but for you, and I do so love him."

Mabel picked up her shapeless ruin of a hat and wondered, now that the excitement was over, what mother would say.

She and Ettie walked soberly in the direction of home, and when they reached the Parade they encountered Mr. and Mrs. Pell, the trim and spotless Nora, Mabel's mother, and her grandfather. The gentlemen had arrived by an earlier train, and the whole party had come out to look for Mabel. Mrs. Pell was the first to recognize her.

"Mabel!" she cried.

"Oh, Mabel!" said the long-suffering mother.

"Is that my Mab, just come home from the wars?" laughed grandpapa.

Little Ettie King stepped bravely forward.

"Please, lady—please, sir, don't scold her. Some boys were going to drown my little Wag, and I couldn't stop them, and she saved him. It was Wag saved her frock so, and the boys knocked her hat off. They were cruel boys, but she was so brave."

"We won't scold her, little woman," said grandpapa. "Come, Mabel."

"Hadn't she better walk home by herself, grandpapa?" said Nora, drawing aside her spotless skirts as her cousin, with drooping head, approached her.

"No, my dear. Give me your hand, Mab. If Nora is too fine to walk with us, she can go on in front."

Miss Nora confided to an acquaintance next day that she could not understand why people made a fuss over Mabel.

"Because she is so naughty. She fought with vulgar boys yesterday about a dog belonging to that child who sings with the minstrels, and though she came home in a dreadful state, auntie didn't scold, and grandpa gave her the loveliest bangle, and me only a stupid book. Last night I saw the darkey's wife speaking to Mabel—thanking her, I suppose—and Mab lifted up her face and kissed her. Fancy that! I told grandpa, but he only laughed. Mother says she cannot understand it, and that Mabel is spoiled by everybody. Isn't it queer, Aline?"

"She is a very nice girl though," said Aline thoughtfully.

Nora turned away with an air of disgust. She had expected sympathy, and here was another disappointment.

"I think you are as bad as the rest," she said loftily.

THE WASSAIL BOWL.—The wassail bowl is an institution which is fast disappearing: but we still have it with us—more so indeed in some parts of the country than in others. The word "wassail" is derived from the Saxon Wæs hal, "Be in health."

It was the custom on New Year's Eve to sit round the cherry ingle and pass from one to the other the glowing bowl, each as it left his hands pronouncing the kindly word "Wassail," or "Health be with you." We are told that this custom originated with an historical incident, related by Geoffrey of Monmouth.

Shortly after Hengist the Saxon had invaded England at the request of the British chieftain Guortoyrn, he invited the latter to a splendid banquet.

His daughter, Rouix, or Rowena, a beautiful golden-tressed, blue-eyed woman, in the course of the feast entered the royal presence, bearing a bowl of wine, and addressed him, "Louerd Kynge, Wæs-heil," whereup the love-smitten king replied, "Drinc-heil."

Bourne, in his Antiquitates Vulgares, tells us that "there was an ancient custom for young women to go about with a wassail-bowl, that is a bowl of spiced ale, on New Year's eve, with some sort of verses that were sung by them in going about from door to door."

They were liberally rewarded for their trouble by those they visited. Brave old stalwart knights, chivalrous squires, peerless dames, wits—like Shakspere and Ben Jonson, who met at the "Mermaid" and "discoursed the bravest jests"—from hand to hand have passed the wassail-bowl, and "flashed from its ample round a sunlike day."

DISCRIMINATION IN YOUTH.—The power of discrimination is feeble in youth, but will grow in proportion to the exercise it is called upon to make. As far as possible, young persons should be brought into contact with those who combine goodness and strength, and will thus command their respectful admiration.

If this be the general character of the influences around them, and especially if they see that this is the kind of character that wins the esteem of those whom they love and honor, they will sensibly acquire a distaste for what is low, mean, and selfish. As the child habituated to physical cleanliness will regard dirty habits with disgust, and not sympathy, so he who is brought up in an atmosphere of mental vigor and moral purity will recoil from the weak self-indulgence, the wilful carelessness, and the want of principle which he must often witness.

THE WORLD'S HAPPENINGS.

When the upper eyelid covers half or more of the pupil the indication is of deliberation.

Butter-making is encouraged by 4455 patents either on devices employed or methods of manufacture.

Eyes that are wide apart are said by physiognomists to indicate great intelligence and tenacious memory.

Inasmuch as Prince Edward of York has attained the age of one and a half years he is to be reproduced in a life-size marble statue.

The little hamlet of Alicetон, Jefferson County, Wis., enjoys the distinction of being the only settlement in the Badger State in which no woman resides.

Experts from a prominent bicycle manufactory have been engaged to instruct the convicts in the Indiana State prison at Warsaw, Ind., in the art of making bicycles.

The women of the State of Missouri are circulating a petition to the Governor of the State asking him to appoint only married men as resident physicians in the insane asylums of the State.

Gout is a veritable scourge in England, and not more than one person in ten suffers from the disease in some form. No plague of modern times seems to have caused like suffering and mortality.

At the Joliet, Illinois, Penitentiary is a German prisoner whose musical attainments have made him quite famous. He is the leader of the prison orchestra, and his musical compositions are widely known.

The Medical Society of Berne, Switzerland, advises the passing of a law prohibiting the publication of accounts of suicides, on the ground that the reading of such accounts suggests suicide to certain people.

The costume of a Russian nurse consists of a red velvet skirt, a black velvet bodice, and a bright blue satin apron, embroidered with gray flowers, and on the head a wonderful diadem of red velvet, with gaudy gold ornaments.

King Charles II. of England had in Court a pigmy, Richard Gibson. This mite married Anne Shepherd, the Queen's dwarf, each being 45 inches tall. Gibson was quite an artist, and his miniatures and portraits are much valued.

As an indication of what the all-around woman of the future may be like, it is noted that Miss Teresa Barcolow, LL. B., President of the Society for Political Study, is one of the best dressed women in New York and very fond of home life.

Dean Hole, of Rochester, England, having seen Wilson Barrett's new play, "The Sign of the Cross," calls it "a sacred endeavor to ring out the false, ring in the true," and calls on "all earnest Christians" to support it "by their presence and their praise."

An odd instrument has just been invented combining a fan and an ear trumpet. The deaf lady, when she wishes to hear what is being said, folds up her fan into a shape somewhat like the paper packets used by grocers, and applies the small end to her ear.

Norway is the best telephoned country in the world, in spite of the fact that 70 per cent. of its area is uncultivable, and another 24 per cent. is forest. It has one exchange for every 703 inhabitants and one telephone to each 40 inhabitants—8½ times the number in this country.

While conducting some business with an old man in Jeffersonville, Ind., William Baldwin was introduced to his customer's niece. Her attractive face won his heart. Baldwin offered to escort her home; but on the way he declared his love, was accepted and the happy couple at once eloped.

The citizens of Smithland, Ky., recently resorted to snowballs in order to extinguish a fire. It seems the water was frozen, and some hit upon the novel scheme of using snow. It is announced that the method employed served the purpose, and the fire was extinguished before it had gained any considerable headway.

A society of deaf mutes in New York held its annual ball on Wednesday night last. The ball was practically the same as any other, with the exception that the music was somewhat louder than usual, thus causing greater vibrations, for it is by these vibrations alone that the deaf mutes are enabled to keep time with the music.

It has again become the fashion, as it was during the last century, for European women of high birth to take a regular course in nursing and household medicine as a part of their education. Among those who have graduated from leading schools of nursing are the Queen of the Belgians, the Duchess of Albany and the Duchess of Portland.

Mrs. Lanus Pond, of Dedham, Me., has carried on her farm alone since the death of her husband two years ago. She uses a Hereford bull to do the plowing and hauling, and works him harnessed to a cart like a horse. When she goes to market the bull is hitched to the wagon, and she jumps in and rides away, guiding him by ropes running to a ring in the nose. At a late fair held in Dedham she took the first prize for unhitching and hitching up again in the shortest time.

CHEER.

BY A. C.

Look from the midnights to the morns—
Be patient through the pale distress:
Evermore reddening out of thorns
Comes the sweet roses of happiness.

'Tis only through the dismal rack
Of clouds, our eyes can bear the sun—
Only the broken glass gives back
A thousand shapes instead of one.

OF NOVEL SHIPS.

The attempt which a French builder is just now making to construct a steamship which shall roll over the water instead of being forced through it, will recall to mind many schemes of the past for revolutionizing ocean navigation.

Fads in shipbuilding seem to date from the seventeenth century, when a Dutch merchant gave orders for a vessel to be constructed for him like the pictorial representation of Noah's Ark. The shipping folk in the town where he resided jeered at him for his eccentric idea; but when the craft was completed, and she was found capable of carrying a third more cargo than other owners' ships, and no extra men were required to work her, the laugh changed sides. Probably this is the only instance on record of a "fad" turning out successful when put to a practical test.

In 1814, William Doncaster patented was in described as being "the first hydrostatic ship which has ever appeared upon the habitable globe." It made five pontoons, sharp pointed, to divide the displaced water, so that she would rise well to the waves. Four water-wheels were fixed fore and aft, between pontoons one and two, and four and five, through which the water ran to propel the vessel. This invention, as might readily be seen proved to be of no use whatever.

Great things were expected to result from the introduction of the Aqua-aerial or wave-ship, but nothing has been heard of the invention for some years now. The vessel was designed with a view of doing away with the causes of sea-sickness, and to attain railway speed at sea, combined with safety and steadiness. She was a broad flat-bottomed structure with a semicircular bow, and had three keels, screw propellers, and a steam-engine.

Except at the stern, the vessel did not rest upon the water, but upon a layer of air, introduced by means of funnels installed upon the deck. The three keels, besides diminishing the rolling, retained between them the air introduced below the hull, and prevented it from escaping at the sides.

As the speed of the vessel developed, so the shallow draught, it was stated, decreased. The propellers were entirely submerged. Instead of ploughing its way through the water, the ship was to skim along or over the surface, in order to avoid wave-making, and thus get rid of the resistance of a large body of water. By means of this invention, the journey to England and back was to be effected in six days.

In 1883 Captain William Coppin, who built the first large screw steamer which crossed the ocean, designed a new style of vessel, models of which were exhibited at Boston. It was a compound ship, composed of three hulls fastened together, the whole being decked over. The outer hulls were of narrow beam and of equal length; and a much shorter hull was placed in the centre space between the two longer vessels.

The three hulls were rigidly connected by iron or steel bulkheads, box-girders, and steel decks or frames, in such a way as to form complete platforms or decks, so as to leave considerable extra spaces between the ships. The centre ship carried the engines, and was provided with a propeller at each end. All three hulls tapered from the centre, both vertically and longitudinally, and came to a rounded point at both ends, so as to enter the wave and reduce the pitching motion to a minimum, the rolling motion being done away with by the extent of water-spaces between the ships.

The platforms or decks extended about three-fifths of the whole length of the outside ships in the centre, and the remaining portions of the ends, forward and aft, were covered over for passing through the waves, but the space between was not decked over. Stability, safety, and speed were claimed for vessels so constructed, and the design was stated to have been approved by eminent naval men.

Probably the only vessel of its kind in the world was built at Christianstad, in Sweden, in 1890. It could be propelled on land by means of its own engines, and was intended for the traffic on two lakes close to Boras, which were separated by a strip of land.

Rails were laid between the two lakes, and the steamer was to run itself across from one lake to the other. When tried at the works, the vessel fulfilled the tests very well. The engine was of ten horse-power, and the boat could accommodate some sixty passengers.

Mr. Edison is now reported to be at work with a plan to grease the sides of ships, so that they will slip through the water more readily. He says that the friction of salt water and its constituents is much more than is generally believed; and if he can only do what he thinks possible, the Campania will be enabled to travel from Liverpool to New York in four days.

Curiously enough, several inventors have designed steamships which were stated to be capable of performing this voyage in four, four and a half, and five days; but it is a matter of doubt whether the rapid runs already made by vessels of the ordinary type will ever be reduced to any appreciable extent, due regard being paid to safety during all weathers.

DO NOT BEGRUDGE PRAISE.—Why is it that even with the nearest and dearest praise is so begrudged, while blame is always so freely bestowed? In nine cases out of ten the former does infinitely more good and incites to far greater exertion than the latter. Nevertheless, as a rule, the fondest parent, the kindest teacher, the most faithful friend, often hesitates to praise, while seldom failing to censure when the occasion calls for it. There is ever the feeling latent that the recipient will be unduly elated by any approbation; and parents and teachers sometimes hesitate on that account to express unstinted commendation, while brothers and sisters, and even friends, often at heart really begrudge the satisfaction and perhaps self-complacency they might evoke by giving expression to the admiration they may honestly feel.

Grains of Gold.

Wealth is not his who gets it, but his who enjoys it.

If you want to be miserable, you should be selfish.

Those who know most should still continue to learn.

Man is a sort of tree which we are too apt to judge of by the bark.

A hypocrite in the church is no better or worse than one anywhere else.

Everywhere endeavor to be useful, and everywhere you will be at home.

No man can have a better legacy to the world than a well-educated family.

Temperance is reason's girdle and passion's bridle, the strength of the soul and the foundation of virtue.

After a man has received two favors in succession he begins to consider them part of his constitutional rights.

What a vast deal of time and ease that man gains who is not troubled with an impertinent curiosity about others!

Men spend their lives in the service of their passions, instead of employing their passions in the service of their lives.

How numerous soever any man's ill-qualities are, it is just that he should have the due praise of his few real virtues.

Femininities.

A good man in a strange town has nowhere to go.

The good housewife will form no opinion of her new neighbors until after they have their washing out.

Maude: How sickening it is to hear men paying compliments to women! Ethel: To other women—yes.

A woman isn't fit to have a baby who doesn't know how to hold it, and this is as true of a tongue as of a baby.

Never pour boiling water over tea-trays, japanned articles, etc., as it will cause the varnish to crack and peel off.

Mildred: I wouldn't marry the best man in the world! Mr. Suitor: There is no danger. The bride never gets the best man.

The Queen of Portugal has been studying medicine for some time in order to be better able to care for her invalid husband.

Muggins: There goes a girl who kept me out of a fortune. Baggins: How was that? Muggins: She's rich, and she refused to marry me.

According to a writer in a current magazine one of the causes for which a man may divorce his wife in Japan is "talking too much."

The Spaniards must be a cynical people, or they'd never have such a proverb as "A woman's tears cost but little, but bring her much."

"Gossip is a sort of smoke that comes from the dirty tobacco-pipes of those who diffuse it; it proves nothing but the bad taste of the smoker."

An English judge decides that throwing rice at a newly-married couple is an assault, whether the eyes of either of them are put out or not.

"What is the difference between an angry lover and a jilted maid?" "Give it up, old man!" "Why, one is a cross-bean and the other is a out-lass."

Have you never tried to save a little money for your very own and buy something you have long wanted, and then been compelled to spend it on somebody else?

In a French ball-room. "Who is that pretty little blonde yonder?" "You don't know her? Why, she is the pretty little brunette whom you saw here last week."

"Why do you call me Birdie, my dear?" inquired a wife of her husband. "Because," was the brutal answer, "you are always associated in my mind with a bill."

Queen Victoria has sent a unique present to her newest great-grandchild in Russia. It consists of forty-eight gold safety-pins, ornamented in pearls, which form the word "Baby."

Among the perquisites which the Queen as sovereign of England may claim may be mentioned the head, or whalebone half, of every whale and sturgeon caught in British waters.

"Married couple resemble a pair of shears," says Sydney Smith, "so joined that they cannot be separated, often moving in opposite directions, yet always punishing any one who comes between them."

He, to his wife: You don't seem to have the courage of your convictions. She: I should like to know how you arrive at that conclusion? He: You say there's no use talking, and then you talk for hours!"

When he asked for her hand she replied, "No, George; my heart is quite at your service, but I think I had better keep my hand myself. It might be useful to me in case you couldn't support me, you know."

Mrs. Newwife: I brought a lovely bottle of medicine to day, warranted to cure St. Vitus' dance. I only paid 35 cents for it. Her Hubby: But neither of us has that disease. I know, but it was marked down from 50 cents.

Two American girls, Isabella and Sally Broadbent, who last year helped to save the crew of a wrecked Norwegian ship, have been presented with silver lockets and chains by King Oscar of Norway and Sweden in recognition of their bravery. The lockets are inscribed with the monogram and crown of the King, and bear the words, "For a Noble Deed."

Five-year-old Mary had fretted and made herself disagreeable, and at night her elder sister put her to bed with a feeling of relief. "There, child," she said, as she kissed her good-night. "I hope you won't be so cross to-morrow!" Mary had cuddled down under the blankets, but at this speech she sat upright again. "I notice," said she, "that, when it's me, you say 'cross'; when it's you, you say 'nervous.'"

"I never saw such a man in all my born days!" exclaimed Mrs. Crimsonbeak to her husband, who had been imposed upon in a purchase she had requested him to make for her. "I never knew you to get anything without being cheated." "What, never?" said Crimsonbeak, chestnutically. "No, never!" emphatically replied Mrs. Crimsonbeak. "Well, perhaps you are right. I have always been suspicious of it since the day I was married." And then he opened the window to see how far he'd have to jump to the ground.

Masculinities.

When other remedies are not at hand, rags soaked in milk are valuable for burns on the skin.

Old King Albert of Saxony smokes a heavy German pipe with a porcelain bowl and is devoted to it.

Patent-leather shoes and boots are best cleaned with a little sweet-oil on a soft rag, after wiping off any dust.

Very few people know the sound of their own voice. When they hear it in a phonograph they are much surprised.

Congressman Sulloway, of New Hampshire, is one of the tallest men in the new Congress. He is six feet six inches tall.

Congressman Culberson, of Texas, boasts that he defended 110 men charged with murder and secured the acquittal of every one of them.

Chulalongkorn, king of Siam, has been experimenting with the fashionable toothpick shoes now in vogue. Already he rides a bike.

Lord Frankfort de Montmorency, the General in command in Dublin, has ordered that all the British officers in that city must wear mustaches.

When the under arch of the upper eyelid is a perfect semicircle it is indicative of goodness, but also of timidity, sometimes approaching cowardice.

Some folks," said Uncle Eben, "gits de reppitation of bein' great leaders, when, as a matter of fack, dey is jes' being shoved forward f'um behind."

We talk about children of this day and time learning evil early. How about that patient old fellow, Job, who is said to have cursed the day he was born?

Judge: Haven't I seen you here before? Prisoner: Your face is very familiar, but I can't just remember the circumstances under which we previously met.

Who says the red man is incapable of becoming civilized? Chief Alexander Tall, a full-blooded Osage Indian, treasurer of the tribe, is short in his accounts some $300 to $400.

Franklin once said to a servant who was always late, but always ready with an excuse: "I have generally found that the man who is good at an excuse is good for nothing else."

The prima donna: What did you think of my last solo? I tried to give the impression of some one singing in the distance. The soubrette: Well, you succeeded. It was away off.

In Japan there are a large number of women who provide amusement for wealthy members of their sex by telling stories, reciting, singing songs, or playing musical instruments. They make a comfortable livelihood by this occupation.

Poor spellers will be rejoiced to know that an eminent British philologist, Professor Earle, believes that the rules of spelling are a great and useless mental tyranny, and holds that literature and true education would be advanced by allowing every person to spell as he liked.

It is stated that more than half the consumption in the world is due to wrong breathing and disuse of one lung. Remarkable cures of persons with consumptive tendencies have been effected by their taking singing-lessons, in which the right method of breathing has been taught.

Wife: Can you tell me, my dear, why a widower is like a young baby? Husband: H—m—er—because—because— Wife: The first six months he cries a great deal, the second six months he begins to take notice, and he always experiences great difficulty in getting through his second summer.

A New Woman of Rockland, Me., successfully opposed woman suffrage in a public debate on the subject recently held in that town. Her argument was that if a woman be not smart enough to control a man's vote under the present suffrage laws she certainly isn't smart enough to have a vote herself.

Senator John M. Thurston, of Nebraska, says he is a descendant of that Thorstein, son of Eric the Red, of Scandinavia, who is said to have made an expedition to Vineland, New England, in 1000. At a later period the family settled in England, and one of its members was Thurston, twenty-eighth Archbishop of York.

Little Grace Colvin, of Bristol, Conn., aged 9 years, received a medal from the Connecticut Humane Society the other day. Her playmate was buried from the caving-in of a sandbank, and Grace saved her life by digging sand enough away so as to expose her face. Her presence of mind in doing this saved her companion's life.

"You must have been out when decent feet were handed around," said the young man, as he looked over the back of his seat at a pair of bunion bedecked feet. "No," said the proprietor, "no; they had plenty like yours, but I had only one suit of clothes, and I have no use for trunks." And everybody smiled but the young man, and he made believe he had dropped his hat out of the window.

Latest Fashion Phases.

Emerald green velvet is the material in a recently seen dress. The full skirt falling in many graceful folds to the foot is unadorned.

The round bodice, fitting the figure to perfection, has a draped vest of d'Angleterre lace, a velvet collar-band and leg-of mutton sleeves, with lace cuffs. The necklet is sable fur.

The stylish toque worn with this gown is made of green velvet and trimmed with white lace, a green aigrette and soft rolls of the velvet.

Another stylish costume is a gray cloth skirt, trimmed with marten fur, which starts on either side of the front gore, six inches from the foot, which descends to the edge, and is then carried round the sides and back of the skirt. It is lined with gray silk and faced with hair-cloth.

The bodice of petunia mirror velvet, which reflects green, has full basques, edged with fur, which are round at the back and sides, while the front basques are pointed. The full white satin vest terminates under a half belt of velvet, fastened with a diamond buckle. The large collet of guipure, spangled with paillettes, has the high collar edged with fur, and fastened at the neck with a pearl buckle. The full gigot velvet sleeve is encircled at the wrist with marten fur.

The hat has a small jet crown surrounded by a wide double frill of petunia velvet, forming pretty flutings all round the hat, which is very becoming and exceedingly stylish. The only garniture is a bow of spangled lace placed at the right side of the back, and a black aigrette at the left side of the front.

A smart gown has a plain skirt of dark green cloth cut in the regulation style.

The Louis XV coat bodice of black velvet has a moderately long skirt with pointed revers, edged with jet passementerie, which is then carried down the front edges and round the skirt, thus bordering the coat throughout with jet. Daintily painted miniature buttons, set round with brilliants, trim the front edges of the coat from the base of the revers to the waist line. A long vest of gold and cream brocbe is draped with a full jabot of fine cream-colored lace. The collar band is of the brocbe, while the Medici is made of velvet bordered with jet. Either side of the skirt of this chic coat is enriched by painted pockets outlined with passementerie. The leg-of-mutton sleeve has a gauntlet cuff of velvet edged with jet. An all black hat and fancy black velvet muff completes this costume, which is a most attractive walking costume.

Another gown is made of sapphire blue cloth, trimmed with Persian lamb. The full skirt is perfectly plain.

The fitted bodice has full basques at the back, while the front is arranged with double revers cut in two sharp points, edged with Persian lamb. These revers turn back to display a full vest of dahlia velvet, which is drawn in at the waist under a draped waist-band of the same. The high flaring cloth collar is bordered with fur. The sleeve are cut leg-o'-mutton shape, with fur trimmed velvet cuffs.

A useful walking costume for winter wear is made with a plain full skirt of brown hop-sack serge, ornamented on either side of the front by a graduated panel of black and chestnut-brown striped velvet. The bodice of striped velvet is slightly draped in the centre of the front, while bands of cream guipure insertion edged with narrow black lace trim the upper part of the bodice from the shoulder seams to the depth of four inches. The belt and collar-band of purple shot-glace ribbon are finished in the front with a bow of the same. The gigot sleeves of velvet are without garniture.

The full cloth cape is lined with purple shot silk, and has pointed revers of the striped velvet, bordered with Persian lamb. Over each arm is a fan insertion of the velvet, crossed on the shoulder by two short cloth straps, held in position by two small fancy buttons. The flaring collar is composed entirely of Persian lamb, and can be worn either high or low, at the pleasure of the wearer.

As the wheel of fashion revolves, the old styles in shoes revive, improved, of course, by modern taste to make them a novelty. Brocaded silk shoes with extremely high heels and very large buckles are coming in fashion again. This is not a delightful prospect, for there is nothing much more uncomfortable to wear and so injurious to the foot as the high heel.

Low shoes for dancing come in great variety, beaded and strapped across the instep, and black ribbon stitched in a gilt front, with patent leather finish and a gold buckle, makes a very striking evening shoe. Steel beads and tiny buckles on a patent leather shoe, with an openwork crossed front coming high up over the instep, are very effective, and satin shoes to match the gown are always in order. One of the prettiest evening shoes is made of black glace kid, beaded with jet and lined with yellow satin

The new skating boot favored by English women is cut high and stiffened at the side to give support to the ankle. Something nice in a bicycling shoe has high cloth tops, which do away with the necessity of gaiters and are much more trim in appearance.

Brocaded evening gowns have tulle or gauze sleeves in pale colors, either plain, spangled or embroidered, which lighten the effect very prettily, and white satin gowns are made very striking by sleeves of glossy miroir velvet.

Printed velvets and fine velveteens are very much used for blouse waists for gowns, with sleeves like the skirt, or for the entire bodice; and some of them are cut out in the neck, which is filled in with a yoke of satin, with black or white lace full over it.

Colored moire silks which are watered in such a manner that there is a distinct pattern, are very popular for waists, and are also used for revers and collars on gowns and cloaks.

Light chiffon blouses, variously trimmed with ribbon, spangled, passementerie and lace, and worn with dark skirts, are still a feature of theatre dress.

Emeralds, with rubies second in favor, are said to be the leading jewel this season, always excepting the diamond, which is ever first. Opals are also popular at present, and pearls are considered especially suited to young ladies.

The latest craze in Paris among women who lavish their time and affection on pet dogs is the worthy ambition of supplying their canine favorites with a wardrobe almost as complete as their own. The dog tailor is consulted, and the result of the interviews is a full outfit, consisting of reception toilets of silk, fur overcoats, waterproof bathing dresses for the seaside, and at least one dozen night gowns of fine batiste and silk.

Yellow in all the shades of the nasturtium and every tint between cream and gold is in fashionable favor this season, for collars and vests of dark wool gowns.

Odds and Ends.

ABOUT POPULAR STYLES OF EMBROIDERY.

The revival of embroidery as a fashionable pastime seems now to be unquestionable. The call for new designs for ladies to work out is urgent. One of the largest wholesale firms declared that business has not been so brisk for years, whilst at one of the smaller retail houses we learn that there is difficulty in keeping pace with customer's requirements and carrying out the continuous flow of orders.

Spangle work will without doubt shortly become extremely popular. We believe that many ladies who are fond of using their needles to beautify their homes, and consequently take notice of embroideries and so forth, have no conception of the charming decorations which can be produced by means of spangles. They do not see them in the shops they frequent. The mere name spangles suggests to them perhaps a gaudy, glittering ornamentation. How erroneous the idea of gaudiness is would be best proved by inspecting the opera things, photograph frames, book covers, and card cases enriched with spangled designs.

To return to a few things more within the range of amateur workers' general accomplishments. There is some pretty work now done, which is known as etching on linen. Take for example "The Merchant of Venice;" the book is covered in cream linen, on which is etched the Bridge of Sighs in brown silks and gold thread. The etched frontispiece of the book is in fact reproduced on the cover in a simple, sketchy style, which gives the effect of a rough etching.

Another mode of decorating book-covers is to work designs after the fashion prevalent in Charles II.'s time. "The Tempest" is decorated on the front of the linen cover with a tree, the stem worked with parallel lines of gold thread sewn down with silk, the foliage entirely done in small French knots with green and brown silks. Little pocket dictionaries are bound in embroidered linen or in colored satins prettily spangled. The latest idea is to treat pocket maps in the same way.

One of the latest ideas for pincushions is to ornament the corners with loops of baby ribbon; these are in place of the full silk corners which have been popular so long. A blue silk cushion has loops of baby ribbon at each corner, and laid cornerwise over the top; there is a fine white linen d'oyley embroidered with blue silk flower sprays.

A magnificent quilt is of Charles II. period, the ground white lined. The bold flowers, leaves, and stems, which are not too gigantic for beauty, are carried out in shades of blue and brown, double crewels being used for the purpose. The eleven different shades employed are blended with exquisite taste, and the variety of stitches gives great richness to the whole. The draperies for the tester bedstead correspond. We can quite believe the effect will be exceedingly handsome when the work is in position.

We are inclined to think that, as a general rule, ladies are far more particular about the appearance of their bedrooms than was the case a few years ago, and certainly more so than in olden days. Knick-knacks are as much de rigueur in the bedroom as in the drawing-room, and not only the principal bedroom in the house occupies the attention; the guest chamber is every whit as prettily finished, although it may not be quite so handsomely furnished as the principal one. Young girls, too, take great pride in decking out their dressing-tables, writing-tables, and chests of drawers, and in arranging fanciful overmantels.

For the toilet table we noticed at the guild an attractive pin-cushion. It was entirely worked with delicately-tinted twisted silks. A pink lily, with its green leaves, rests on the pale cream ground. Two bands—one of graduated shades of green, the other of shades of pink—surround the cushion, which is edged with silk tassels. The ground of the cushion cover is loose canvas, and on this is a darning of cream twisted silk.

Two exquisite oval frames are of white moire with spangled ornamentation. The design is copied from an old frame, and is light and graceful. Rows of gold cord are sewn on to form a braid, this is repeated, and between the two braids are ribbons embroidered, and French bows represented by tiny dark red spangles.

Little cases for "patience" cards are much in request. They are most neatly manufactured, and are covered with blue brocade, cardinal corded silk, gold or red satin, and so on. Sprays of flowers are amongst the decorations. One case bears a group of leaves, the flowers springing up from them. The leaves are outlined with gold thread, the filling is done with long, oval gold spangles; the flowers are represented by embossed red spangles, and form a sort of coronet above the leaves.

The most delightful effects are secured by using small oval spangles in conjunction with chenille and fine silk embroidery. Spangle work looks its best on white satin, or on some softly tinted moire. To execute these designs, no great technical knowledge of embroidery is needful; the great point is to be natty, to have deft fingers. A lovely frame for a photo is worked with rosebuds and other small flowers, spangles forming the leaves; the stems are of shaded green chenille, and a kind of feather stitch that gives lightness to the design, which shows well on the white satin ground.

Imagine a bag of rich brocade, in which green and blue tints are intermingled with white gold threads running through the pattern; on the pale blue lining a graceful continuous design, wrought in green, gold and blue spangles and silk embroidery. The perfection of these bags is owing not only to the neat workmanship, but to the choice of colors. In this great artistic taste is shown. The patterns which are most attractive are of the French style. Cords of ribbon are used to draw up the bags, and occasionally the drawstrings runs through ivory rings.

Women who embroider will acknowledge how useful a weighted pincushion can be. In many cases it obviates the use of a frame by keeping small pieces of work steady whilst in progress; it is also good for steadying a frame. A pretty specimen of these is of olive satin, embroidered in blue and brown tinted silks, and bordered with a full frill of blue silk.

Never mistrust without cause; but, if you have good reason, give up your doubt to neither argument nor appearance. It is your watch fire, and will let you see the approach of the enemy.

R R R

RADWAY'S READY RELIEF

WILL CURE

No matter how violent or excruciating the pain the Rheumatic, Bedridden, Infirm, Cripple, Nervous, Neuralgic, or prostrated with diseases may suffer.

RADWAY'S READY RELIEF

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Instantly stops the most excruciating pains, allays inflammation and cures congestions, whether of the Lungs, Stomach, Bowels or other glands or mucous membranes.

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CURES AND PREVENTS

Colds, Coughs, Sore Throat, Influenza, Bronchitis, Pneumonia, Rheumatism, Neuralgia, Headache, Toothache, Asthma, Difficult Breathing.

CURES THE WORST PAINS in from one to twenty minutes. Not one hour after reading this advertisement need anyone SUFFER WITH PAIN.

INTERNALLY—A half to a teaspoonful in half a tumbler of water will, in a few minutes, cure Cramps, Spasms, Sour Stomach, Nausea, Vomiting, Heartburn, Sick Headache, Diarrhœa, Colic, Flatulency and all Internal pains.

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MILD BUT EFFECTIVE

Purely vegetable, act without pain, elegantly coated, tasteless, small and easy to take. Radway's Pills assist nature, stimulating to healthful activity the liver, bowels and other digestive organs, leaving the bowels in a natural condition without any bad after effects.

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All Liver Disorders

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Send to DR. RADWAY & CO., Lock Box 365, New York, for Book of Advice.

MAN-OF-WAR PETS.

A HAPPY ship is nearly always an efficient one, writes a sailor. No privilege is more appreciated than being allowed to keep pets on board. During four years' absence from home in Australian waters, and among the cannibal and semi-civilized islands of the South Pacific, many weary hours were whiled away by the numerous pets we had at various times on board.

The first was a goat which was bought in Sydney by the captain, and presented to the lower deck. There are few better pets for a ship than a well-conducted goat. She soon gets passionately fond of her quarters, and will eat anything from a banana to a marlinespike.

This goat became a sadly debauched character. She acquired in a few days such a taste for tobacco, that she would refuse the most enticing delicacy in the way of green stuff for the noxious weed, and indeed she was never happy without a quid in her jaw.

But this was not her worst bad habit. No one on board knew the grog bugle better than she, and punctually she was standing beside the tub at one bell in the afternoon watch, when two glasses of water and one of rum per man are served out to the different messes.

There is naturally always a glass or two left when all are served. This was poured into a can, the grog tub turned upside down, the liquor poured into the shallow bottom; then Nanny drank her tot like a man.

It was too absurd to watch her conduct after this. She would skylark with any one, charge up and down the dock, butt anybody who came in her way, and, in fact, play the "giddy" goat" all round for half an hour or so; then, like other depraved human beings, she would coil herself up in a corner and sleep off the effects of her indulgences.

There was also a little pig on board once in the islands. He was only a temporary acquaintance, and he was ultimately designed to be served hot with apple sauce and vegetables. He used to chase Nanny round the ship as hard as they could go. The midshipman soon improved the show by making jumps in the gangways with sponges, rammers, and broom handles; and many a half hour in dreary tropical climates was spent by all hands watching the sport, and cheering the pair over the hurdles with "Yoicks," "Tally-ho," and "Over."

Working parties used to take Nanny ashore to give her a "fly round" on the grass. She would never go far away from them, and was always ready for the boat to return to the ship.

Sometimes one man would hold her while the others climbed into the cutter, pretending to leave her behind on shore. She would struggle and whine to the best of her abilities; and when loosed, would gallop to the shore as quick as her legs could carry her, and jump into the boat with much delight.

She got into a somewhat delicate state of health, and we gave her to a man living on Cockatoo Island in Sydney Harbor, where the ship was in dock. Two years after, we returned to dock, and found Nanny tethered on the hillside.

She had forgotten none of her particular friends, but came up at once to be petted, and whined and tugged at her chain as hard as she could to get to her old ship again.

Nanny's place was taken by a more fashionable animal—an angola. She has never become anything like so popular, though she is a much more properly conducted animal. She cares little for tobacco, and is a rigid teetotaler.

Sad to relate, she is now very ill indeed, and likely to die. She was addicted to eating brass, rags, and rope ends, instead of wholesome "baccy" and rum, and the liver of even a teetotal goat cannot successfully tackle sail-makers' yarn with needles attached. I am afraid we shall soon have a funeral at sea.

The next pet was a kangaroo. He was presented by a lady in Hobart to one of our lieutenants. He never became quite at home on board, and in a few months took a passage overboard, when nobody was looking, through a gun port, and was seen and heard of no more.

He was addicted to keeping late and irregular hours. He would hide himself away and sleep all day, and then wake up and become aggressively active at about 11 P. M., when everybody had turned in.

Kangaroos are extensively hunted in the country parts of Australia, and give excellent sport. Our friend did so to the sentry and quartermaster of the watch at night. He had a particular fancy for the navigating officer's cabin, which is on the upper deck.

For various reasons the owner of the cabin did not appreciate this flattering preference, and left strict orders with the men on night duty in the neighborhood not to permit his highness to disturb him. The kangaroo used to "lay off" very quietly behind the bits at the other end of the quarter-deck, and wait his opportunity.

When he thought he had a good chance, he would make a rush, and in nine cases out of ten he succeeded in breaking through his enemies' lines and reaching his favorite corner; only, however, to be at once captured and ignominiously evicted. His hop, hop, hop on deck was curious to watch, but the sound of it overhead at night was ridiculously irritating; and no one mourned very much when he took his voluntary departure.

We had also a dear little flying fox. This bird or beast bears somewhat the same resemblance to a fox that a bat does to a mouse—except for size. This pet rarely came aft, and was usually to be seen in the men's mess, hanging on to an overhead rope or rafter.

He was a silent friend, but still most popular. His time was chiefly occupied in discussing, in the most ridiculous serious manner, half a banana or a small bit of soft bread.

He was very quiet and cautious in his habits, but at last he fell a victim to the dangers of a sea faring life. He dropped into the soup copper in the gallery, and was scalded to death before he could be got out.

But the dearest pets of the whole commission were two cassowaries which were bought at New Guinea for a few sticks of trade tobacco by Lord K., a midshipman, and Mr. L., the clerk.

They were quite young and small when they joined the ship, but they very soon became accustomed to their surroundings. They grew rapidly, and it was the regular routine after church on Sunday to have up a pair of scales from the "sick bay," and weigh them, to find out how much they had gained during the week.

The male bird used to gain about two ounces and the female about one and a half ounces per week. Their house was a large wooden box, with bars in front, and it was located under a gun platform in that part of the upper deck where the officers smoked.

During all smoking hours the cassowaries expected to be allowed out, and to have delicacies in the way of fruit brought up to them. If they were not liberated, they would set up such a continuous and angry piping as to show they considered themselves very badly used indeed.

Then they would lie down on their sides in the sun to be stroked and petted. When they were inclined for exercise, they would watch some one walking up and down the quarter-deck, wait till he had a good start, and then run after him so quickly as to be close under his heels at the forward end; then wait and race him back again.

Alas! a sad fate awaited them. We were in dock at Auckland, New Zealand, and the birds had to be landed. A comfortable house was made for them by the midshipmen under a pile of shoring timbers, when one night a bank tumbled down (Oh, sorry log!) and killed the male bird.

The female at once began to pine away and to refuse her food, and in a few days she died, universally lamented by all on board. She was buried by the midshipmen beside her mate, with all due honors.

This ceremony took place during school hours, but the chaplain and naval instructor could not find it in his heart to administer any serious rebuke when he found the young gentlemen standing mournfully around the grave, whistling, with evident emotion, a "dead march."

ODD FANCIES OF THE GREAT.

Greatness in men is no bar to the indulgence of little foibles and human weaknesses and harmless fads and fancies that, at first glance, seem inconsistent with high station. Julius Cæsar, for instance, the ruler of an empire and the mightiest man of his day, was sensitive of his baldness. All the learned men of all the Roman empire could not restore his hair.

So much did this worry Cæsar that he became ill, and dread of eventually becoming totally bald was the constant menace to his happiness. When the day came on which Cæsar discovered that there was no remedy, he set about to find means to conceal his affliction. He had a crown made that covered the entire top and back of his head, but it was torture to wear it.

Daniel Webster had a curious fancy for painting the faces of his cattle. One week the poor beasts would walk around with blue faces and the next would appear with red ones. On the farm he kept many head of cattle, and some of them became so fond of the great expounder that they would follow him about like dogs. Among the number were several that resented his friendliness, and in order to punish these and distinguish them from the rest he painted the face of each a beautiful blue.

The effect was so novel that it pleased him, and from that time forth he changed the color whenever he had a few minutes to spare, and would laugh heartily at the astonishment of his friends when they saw the queer-looking beasts on his premises.

Napoleon occupied all his idle moments in making up puzzles and indulging in intrigues. He said it relieved a man's mind when tired. He would sit for hours trying to devise a puzzle that his comrades could not solve. When tired of this he loved to fight mimic battles, and became angry when he lost. He had his garden constructed in the form of a miniature field, with forts, trenches, waterways and dummy soldiers, by means of which he fought sham battles with his officers.

Peter the Great had a fashion for being carried about in a wheelbarrow, and when not fighting would allow himself for hours at a time to be wheeled around his estates. He said he liked the motion. After a campaign he would return home with a number of guests and at once order wheelbarrows to be got in readiness. Peter on more than one occasion visited the large cities in this strange equipage.

William the Conqueror said he derived more pleasure watching dogs fighting than anything else besides winning a battle. His subjects all over the kingdom sent him dogs by the hundred. From these he would select the fiercest and sit for whole days watching the fights. He had a special retinue of servants and attendants who did nothing but arrange the contests.

George Washington's principal diversion was training baby foxes. He was fond of fox hunting and would pay well for a litter of young Reynards. He took the animals home and trained them in all kinds of tricks which he often exhibited to friends. He used to say that the fox had more brains than any other animal.

President Cleveland likes to paint the children's toys and little odds and ends of household furniture. This is not artistic, to be sure, but more than one *paterfamilias* knows how much real diversion there is in working with paint pot and brush. Seated on a stool, with the youngsters of the White House around him, the President will amuse himself for hours embellishing their toys in the liveliest shades.

Gladstone employs his spare time in wood-carving, and he is said to produce some very fine work. He learned the art when a boy, and has as complete a wood-carving shops as any carver in England. Some of the decorations of his home are his own work, and if he made a business of it he would be a success.

Kaiser Wilhelm finds more amusement in curling his moustache than in almost any pastime. On every appearance in public his moustache has a different curl. All of these are original, so much so, in fact, that before his admirers in the German empire have "caught on" to the new "style" he appears with another.

OREGON WOOD-RATS.—A correspondent from Falls City, Oregon, writes: The Oregon wood-rat has a curious fondness for bright colors. It is larger than the common rat, with a long bushy tail; and it makes its nest at the top of fir-trees—a mass of sticks and moss.

But as soon as any one builds a hut in the forest, the wood-rats come to inspect it, as they are very curious, and also very fond of appropriating any bright objects, and will carry away forks, spoons, etc.

They often desert the trees and begin to build a nest under the roof of the hut, or in any undisturbed place. I once found a nest half-made in an old wash-tub, and lined with red flannel.

When we arrived here thirteen years ago from England, it was nearly evening; the roads had been very rough from Corvallis, and we were quite tired out, and very glad to see the old hut on the claim we had bought.

No one felt inclined to do much that night, so we spread mattresses on the floor and prepared to have a good night's rest. But no sooner was the light extinguished than there came a hurry scurry of little feet, and bright eyes shone all round us, much to our alarm; but they all vanished as soon as the candle was lighted, some taking flight up the wide open chimney, others up some stairs into a loft.

The man who came with us said: "Oh, those are wood-rats. They will carry to their nests any little articles you may leave about."

The next day we obtained traps, and tried to catch them in the same manner as English rats with roasted cheese or a piece of bacon; but they took no notice of either of these delicacies.

We noticed that several times, when I left a bright red crochet shawl I had lying on a chair at night, pieces were torn off it, and once it was dragged up the steps to the loft; so we threw it over a trap, and the next morning a large wood rat measuring sixteen inches from head to tip of tail was caught; and that was the first of ten that were attracted by the same shawl, which never failed to catch one whenever the trap was covered with it.

We very rarely see one now. I suppose they have retired farther back into the forest, away from civilization. In one of their nests here I saw a pocket-knife, a steel fork, a collar stud, and pieces of red flannel shirt. They live upon berries, nuts, and various roots, and seeds of the fir-cones; but do not care for maize, oats, wheat, or potatoes, etc., like squirrels and chipmunks.

MARRIED POLITENESS.—"Will you?" asked a pleasant voice. And the husband answered, "Yes, my dear, with pleasure." It was quietly but heartily said; the tone, the manner, the look, were perfectly natural, and very affectionate. We thought, how pleasant was that courteous *reply*! How gratifying must it have been to the wife! Many husbands of ten years' experience are ready enough with the courtesies of politeness to the young ladies of their acquaintance, while they speak with abruptness to the wife, and do many rude little things without considering them worth an apology. The stranger, whom they may have seen but yesterday, is listened to with deference, and although the subject may not be of the pleasantest nature, with a ready smile; while the poor wife, if she relates a domestic grievance, is snubbed or listened to with ill-concealed impatience.

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Humorous.

"NO"—OR TEN?

"Hast thou a lover," asked he,
"O maiden of the Rhine?"
She blushed in sweet confusion
And softly faltered "Nein."

He felt rebuffed, and knew not
What best to say, and then
A sudden thought came to him;
He pleaded "Make it ten!"

—U. N. Nons.

Puts on airs—The musical composer.

Rather strong butter—An eight-year-old ram.

Things really most necessary to mend—Evil ways.

What kind of paper most resembles a sneeze?—Tissue.

The greatest thing about town just at present is the circumference.

"No man," says a loquacious wife, "ever complains that a woman talks too much when she's a girl and he's engaged to her."

Mr. Goldstein: I vould rather see my daughter in der grave dan your vife.

Mr. Silverstein: Is dot so? I did not know you haf her life insured.

"What right have you to talk about charging batteries?" indignantly asked the old soldier; "you never smelled powder."

"Quite right," responded the young orator; "I am an electrician."

Mrs. Brown: Since they have become engaged, they just sit in the parlor, and not a word passes between them.

Brown: Perhaps there is no room for it to do so.

Woodbee Byer: I thought you said those lots were within gunshot of the depot?

Real Estate Agent: So they are. Those new dynamite guns, you know, can shoot a distance of twenty miles or more.

Young doctor, just on his honeymoon: Just observe, wifey, dear, the curious tints of the sky. That cloud poised on the mountain crest over yonder is exactly the color of a diseased liver.

Jones: This is a very vile cigar, my friend!

Smith, the donor of the cigar: You don't know a good cigar when I give you one.

Jones: Perhaps not; but I know a bad one.

"Just look at the color of this water! Why, it's not fit to drink!" said an indignant guest to the waiter at an hotel in South America.

"Dat's where you is foolin' yerse'f! Hit's de glass what's dirty."

Customer, to barber: Why did you send away Charles? He shaved so well!

Barber: Well enough; but he was as stupid as an owl! Just think—a gentleman who shaves himself sent his razors here to be sharpened; and what do you think that idiot did? Put such an edge on them that the gent could actually shave with them!

Occasional churchgoer, to minister: It was good advice you gave this morning, Mr. Goodman, about laying up treasures where neither moth nor rust can corrupt, and where thieves can't break through nor steal.

Minister, earnestly: It was, indeed, sir, and I trust you will profit by it.

Occasional churchgoer: I intend to. Every farthing I can get goes into land. Moth and rust can't hurt land, and no thief can steal it.

"I am here, gentlemen," explained the pickpocket to his fellow-prisoners, "as the result of a moment of abstraction."

"And I," said the incendiary, "because of an unfortunate habit of making light of things."

"And I," chimed in a forger, "on account of a simple desire to make a name for myself."

"And I," added the burglar, "through nothing but taking advantage of an opening which was offered in a large mercantile establishment in town."

But here the warden separated them.

A young husband, desirous of making a chance to pay a compliment to his young wife, and of receiving an assurance of affection, says, with an aspect of surprise:

"My dear, I heard a very remarkable thing to-day. What's his name told me that he had been looking into the matter very closely, and had discovered that there was only one married woman in this street who wasn't a flirt and really loved her dear hubby better than any other man in the world."

The wife, after mature reflection: "I wonder, now, who it can be? I thought I knew everybody in the street."

"Will you take a bottle of hair restorer?" asked a barber of a customer.

"Not now, thank you," the latter replied. "By-the-way, may I ask you why you don't use the hair restorer yourself? Your locks are rather thin."

As the barber had scarcely a hair on his head, the phrase "rather thin" sounded like sarcasm.

"The boss doesn't allow it," explained the barber.

"Why not? I think it would be a recommendation."

"No. He selects only bald-headed men to work for him, and hopes to sell his hair restorer by having them pass as frightful examples."

PATIENCE.—There is no kind of vocation, no degree, neither spiritual nor temporal, no estate and condition of life, which can lack this excellent virtue, Christian patience. For, as it is some time day, some time night, other whiles cold and frosty winter, other whiles present and lusty summer, and other whiles spring tide, so the life of man and woman is mingled of sweet and sour things.

It hath commodities and pleasures, and it hath griefs and displeasures. There be things that delight and refresh us, and there be as many things which molest, sting, and vex us. For who is there living, either temporal or spiritual, which can truly report that he hath had continual health and welfare, continual prosperity without any storm of adversity? Wherefore patience is necessary unto all sorts of men.

TEMPERANCE A DIVINE BLESSING.—As for temperance, it may range in respect of times from a daily moderation of wine, to a single annual glass dropped into the diet. And as to quantity also, instinct and experience are its compass. But, whatever the natural regime, the practice of temperance is a divine blessing—second only to the use of reason.

For temperance is the whetstone of our faculty of observation; and the axe of reform, which is to hew away for ever at one vice or another, is nowhere so well sharpened as on its square and eager sides.

Temperance, again, is the home of the virtues and powers, which shelters them in their nonage, and which they enlarge and furnish in their maturity, until it includes the images, pictures, and tastes of them all.

Or again, it is the native land of man, as different from the beasts;—or, to speak without figure, temperance, including eating as well as drinking, is the foundation of our refinement, as involving constant acts of physical judgment or bodily wisdom.

Intemperance is the devil opposite to this angel—temperance. It dulls every sense, burns out passion prematurely, and turns the mind light of intelligence, as it flicks it towards extinction, into a horrid reproach against a swine-hood which is reeling down to discipline, of which total abstinence is but a shadow.

For intemperance fosters and aggravates nearly every disease that flesh is heir to, and sharpens the power and sting of every sin—nay, calls out fresh legions of infernals; the ghastly troops of malady and wickedness deploy before it, and muster, as on a field-day of death, where excess of wine is a prevalent vice among the people.

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No. 2. From forehead back as far as bald.	No. 2. From forehead over the head to neck, No. 2.
No. 3. Over forehead as far as required.	No. 3. From ear to ear over the top.
No. 4. Over the crown of the head.	No. 4. From ear to ear round the forehead.

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This preparation has been manufactured and sold at Dollard's for the past fifty years, and its merits are such that, while it has never yet been advertised, the demand for it keeps steadily increasing.

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Leave 24th and Chestnut Sts., 3.55, 6.08, 9.25, 10.14, 11.14 a m, 12.57 (Dining car), 2.38, 3.45, 6.12, 8.10 (dining car), 11.45 p m. Sunday 3.55, 8.08, 10.18 a m, 12.14, 3.45, 6.12, 8.10 (dining car), 11.45 p m.

Leave New York, foot of Liberty street, 4.30, 8.02, 9.00, 10.00, 11.30 a m, 1.30, 2.30, 3.30, 4.00 (two-hour train), 5.00, 6.00, 7.30, 8.45, 10.00 p m, 12.15 night. Sundays—4.30, 9.00, 10.00, 11.30, a m, 2.30, 4.00, 5.00, 6.00 p m, 12.15 night.

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FOR BETHLEHEM, EASTON AND POINTS IN LEHIGH AND WYOMING VALLEYS, 6.08, 8.00, 9.00 a m, 1.00, 2.00, 4.30, 5.30, 6.33, 9.45 p m. Sundays—6.27, 8.32, 9.40 a m, 1.05, 4.20, 6.33, 9.45 p m. (2.45 p m, does not connect for Easton on Sunday.)

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For Reading—Express, 8.35, 10.00 a m, 12.45, 4.00, 6.00, 11.30 p m. Accom., 4.20, 7.42 a m, 1.42, 4.35, 5.22, 7.20 p m. Sunday—Express 4.00, 9.05 a m, 11.30 p m. Accom., 7.20 a m, 6.00 p m.

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For Shamokin and Williamsport—Express, 8.35, 10.00 a m, 4.00 11.30 p m. Sunday—Express, 9.05 a m, 11.30 p m. Additional for Shamokin—Express, week-days, 6.00 p m. Accom., 4.20 a m. Sundays—Express, 4.00 a m.

FOR ATLANTIC CITY.

Leave Chestnut Street and South Street Wharves: Week-days—Express, 9.00, a m, 2.00, 4.00, 5.00, p m. Accommodation, 8.00 a m, 4.30, 6.30 p m. Sundays—Express, 9.00, 10.00 a m. Accommodation, 8.00 a m, 4.45 p m.

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